NUNC COGNOSCO EX PARTE

TRENT UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

PRESENTED
IN MEMORY OF
F.J. Morris
by
Mrs. H.H. Graham

MADE IN
GREAT BRITAIN.

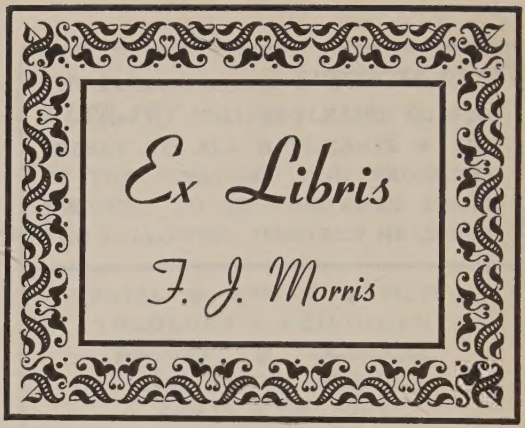
EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY
EDITED BY ERNEST RHYS

BIOGRAPHY

LIVES OF THE NOVELISTS

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
GEORGE SAINTSBURY



BIOGRAPHY
REFERENCE
ROMANCE

IN TWO STYLES OF BINDING, CLOTH, FLAT BACK, COLOURED TOP, AND LEATHER, ROUND CORNERS, GILT TOP.

LONDON: J. M. DENT & SONS, LTD.
NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.

EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY
EDITED BY ERNEST RHYS

BIOGRAPHY

LIVES OF THE NOVELISTS
BY SIR WALTER SCOTT
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
GEORGE SAINTSBURY

PR 105 . S364 1910

INTRODUCTION

Sir Walter Scott's *Lives of the Novelists*—as they have come to be called by an irresistible analogy and a just ascription of title, though he himself claimed for them no more important name than "Biographical and Critical Sketches"—occupy a position in literature which is almost unique. They might not have existed if Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* had not preceded them, or if these in their turn had not been preceded by a series of attempts tracing themselves to not dissimilar work of Dryden, who is really the inventor, so far as English is concerned, and much more the inventor in general literature than is sometimes allowed. They were (as their author says in that incomparable manner of his) "written for the purpose of serving as Prefaces to a collection called Ballantyne's *Novelist's Library*, a work undertaken by the late Mr. John Ballantyne, bookseller in Edinburgh, a person whom no one knew without being desirous to oblige him." As it happened, the writer of these words had obliged Mr. John Ballantyne, bookseller in Edinburgh, with his fortune, and was going in a few years to oblige those insatiable Manes with his life. On this occasion he obliged at comparatively small cost. The Introductions were a present to John the Picaroon, and Scott never received a penny for them; but, on the other hand, there was no boomerang stamped paper to come home to the person for whom it ought to have hit game. The enterprise, like all the Ballantyne enterprises which were not pure Scott, failed; and, though the ten big volumes have always been precious on the shelves to lovers of literature, their size, their weight, their double columns, are not precisely the form in which one prefers to read novels. But Galignani promptly had the wisdom to "detach" (as the *Quarterly* put it with a wisdom equal to that which used "convey") the Introductions, and before many years they took their place in the smaller and larger collections of Scott's "Prose Works." These Prose Works have generally been neglected in the most unintelligent fashion. But it is certain

255249

that no one, unless very frivolous, very ignorant, very conceited, or (as not infrequently happens) very all three, has neglected them when writing about the persons concerned. It is also, I think, tolerably certain that some of those who have not neglected them have neglected to acknowledge the amount of their obligations.

For the situation, as has been said, was unique, and it was worthily met. Here was an art—not a century old in its complete discovery, though counting "tries" and embryonic failures, as well as some successes in special departments, over a couple of thousand years. Here was the living master of that art, who had opened new regions to it, dealing with his predecessors, and dealing with them in a fashion giving scope for talents which, if not his greatest, were great.

Among the well-known dicta of critical commonplace there are few better known ones than the statements that Scott was too good-natured in the first place, and too careless about strict rules of art in the second, to be an effective critic. The first is a fallacy, and the second is a falsehood. Good nature never hurt a critic, though ill nature has spoilt many a one: and though Scott was not a "stop-watch" critic, though he had the full Romantic largeness and readiness to judge by the result and the artist's purpose, not by preconceived and pre-promulgated rules, his opinions on most critical subjects were singularly sound, and those on his own art quite remarkably so. He was wholly incapable of that most vulgar of vulgar errors, the trick of disdaining "the Last Age;" his extraordinary freedom from vanity or egotism of any kind made him not in the least likely to blame an author for following different lines from those which he had himself preferred. The present volume does not indeed give the whole of his critical dealings with the novel—the Introduction to the *Fortunes of Nigel* and one or two others, the remarkable entry in the Diary after reading *Sir John Chiverton* and *Brambletye House*, with not a few scattered passages, would have to be added to complete the subject from one point of view—but the actual substance of the present volume is tolerably self-sufficient.

We know that the *Novelist's Library* remained unfinished, but it is not, I think, known whether any definite plan of contents had been originally formed. There are some oddities about it as it stands. Scott, risking and incurring the displeasure of some who generally agreed with him by

giving some of the works of the eccentric and unpopular Bage, does not give them all, and omits the one which he himself calls the best: while one would have imagined that, to him especially, such a thing as Graves's *Spiritual Quixote* would have certainly had the precedence of Cumberland's on the whole dull and in parts rather nasty *pastiche* of Fielding—*Henry*. But what actually appeared gave ample opportunity to the critic. Here on the one hand were the great "Quadrilateral"—Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne—who marked out and fortified for ever the position of the English Novel. Here were the trio—Horace Walpole, Clara Reeve, and Mrs. Radcliffe—who were in different senses Scott's own ancestor and ancestresses in regard to some aspects of his work. Here were the great foreign contributions of Cervantes and Lesage; the mighty and lonely masterpiece of *Gulliver;* the famous contrast of *Rasselas* and the *Vicar of Wakefield;* the enigmatical and perhaps not indispensable satire of *Chrysal;* and (rather cruelly included as it now may seem) the amiable but absurd lacrimosities of Henry Mackenzie. These last had no Introduction (it would have been awkward to write), and that to Swift was merely extracted (in both senses) from Scott's larger *Life*. But the Prefaces to the rest form the substance of the present volume.

The whole of it is interesting; but there is no doubt that the interest concentrates itself on the quartet and the trio above mentioned. In dealing with the former Scott is performing the most grateful office of the critic—that of praising with discrimination the famous men, our fathers that were before us; in dealing with the latter he is in a manner pleading *pro domo sua* and giving shrewd examples of individual censure at the same time.

It is perhaps a slight, though after all only a very slight, misfortune that Scott adopted the practice of proportioning the length of his Introductions to the bulk of the work introduced. At least this is what he *said* he did, though perhaps there might be some other reasons for his giving seventy-four pages to Richardson and only twenty-six to Sterne; forty to the author of *Henry* and thirteen to the author of *Rasselas*. But, long or short, his notices of the great Four are always interesting. Not least so perhaps is the touch of patriotic partiality which makes him put Smollett not indeed above Fielding, but on a level with him: and the tell-tale weakness of the argument by which he supports this certainly excessive

exaltation of a novelist who can be placed high enough without it. He recognises in Fielding "the father of the English Novel," and frankly declares him "unapproached as yet in forcible yet natural exhibition of character." But he finds in Smollett more "inventiveness," and greater range. It is curious that against the first part of this we have to set an opposite judgment from a later critic—one of the two or three who can be put on a level as expert with Scott himself. "I fancy he did not invent much," says Thackeray of Smollett, and there is hardly a page of that still great master of fiction which does not bear out the "fancy." Scott seems to have been deceived by his compatriot's greater variety of scene. It is true that this is with Fielding extraordinarily limited; as somebody has said, London, the Bath Road, and the Western and Midland circuits almost exhaust it, while Smollett wanders over England and Scotland, the West Indies and the Spanish Main, Germany, France, and where not. His experience had been considerable, and he used it; but the run of semi-picaresque adventure takes little real colour from the change of place, except in his sea scenes.

Except in this preference, however, and in a rather hurried estimate of Sterne—with whom he does not seem to have felt quite comfortable—there is very little fault to find with this, one of the earliest comparative estimates of the Four. Yet it is perhaps in the other batch that the greatest interest will lie for most people. Although the present writer adores romances, and, in re-reading the *Letters* almost annually, sheds at every reading more and more of an old dislike to Horace Walpole, he cannot profess much affection for *The Castle of Otranto*. But Scott's defence of it is so warm and so ingenious, he bestrides the body of this elder chieftain of his tribe with such valour and vigour, that it is impossible not to sympathise. Equally ingenious (and perhaps a little more candid) is his allowance of the faults of that marvellously dull book, *The Old English Baron*, while still championing its class; and the essay on Mrs. Radcliffe is probably the best in the whole set. It might be canonised, indeed, for one remarkable sentence, anticipating a much more generally known one of Hugo's in the Preface to the *Orientales* five years later, and formulating, as one may doubt whether it had ever been formulated before, the great principle of Romantic as contra-distinguished from Classical criticism. "The real and only point is whether, considered as a separate and distinct species

of writing, that introduced by Mrs. Radcliffe possesses merit and affords pleasure; for these premises being admitted, it is as unreasonable to complain of the absence of advantages foreign to her style and plan, and proper to those of another style of composition, as to regret that the peach-tree does not produce grapes or the vine peaches."

Yet, despite this all-important, and then be it remembered, very novel and rather heretical revelation (which must have not a little scandalised Croker and some others of Scott's friends on both *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh*), he was not so much absorbed in his admiration of Mrs. Radcliffe's narrative and descriptive powers as to be blind either to the excessive monotony of her plot and characters, or to the faults of her machinery. Although the hanging judges of that time—who could gravely adopt the absurd motto of the *Edinburgh* and regard a Review as a dock where the best thing the prisoner could expect was a verdict of Not Guilty—might have thought it too polite, no critical examination was ever more searching and more final than his of Mrs. Radcliffe's "explained supernatural." Such a master of the *un*explained supernatural as the author of *Wandering Willie's Tale* could not but feel the poverty and the provocation of the other proceeding; and such an expert in story-telling, even if he was not always too careful to "join his flats" himself, could not but detect the numerous instances in which the machinery itself "machines," so to speak, imperfectly, even on its own principles.

Of the minor and miscellaneous articles the Lesage is perhaps the most generally interesting, because of the very great influence which that writer has had on English novelists: while the frank partiality which is avowed for Bage is the most curious. Most things about this odd writer — his free thought, his free speech, his revolutionary politics, and his more than unconventional ethics—might have been thought likely to disgust Scott; and the style of his novels—modern, dealing with manners or crotchets, and only Romantic in the improbability of the adventures and characters — was quite opposite to that of *Waverley* and its fellows. But there is no doubt that Bage had a very considerable power of narrative, and this is what Scott recognised wherever he found it. With that unconquerable and unconventional commonsense which was wedded to his genius, he saw that a novel, to be good for anything, *must* "tell a story," use live speech, describe real or imaginably probable places, project on the

screen figures which have at any rate some life and reality. If all of these, so much the better; if most, very good; if only one, not so bad. This is the test which, as a matter of fact, he applies throughout. It saves the Jacobin Quaker; it saves (some of us may think not much more than *vix*) Cumberland. It would be rather interesting to know whether he really thought that it saved the good Henry Mackenzie, when he made a whole pressgang burst into tears at the touching conduct of a father who offers himself to ransom his son. However, this he was, in the circumstances, excused from telling us.

G. S.

The following is a list of the works of Sir Walter Scott, 1771-1832:—

Disputatio Juridica, etc., 1792 (Exercise on being called to the Bar); The Chase, and William and Helen (from German of Bürger), 1796; Goetz of Berlichingen (translation of Goethe's Tragedy); Apology for Tales of Terror (includes some of Author's ballads), privately printed, 1799; The Eve of St. John: A Border Ballad, 1800; Ballads in Lewis's Tales of Wonder, 1801; Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders, 1802, 1803; Lay of the Last Minstrel, 1805; Ballads and Lyrical Pieces, 1806; Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field, 1808; Life of Dryden; The Lady of the Lake, 1810; Vision of Don Roderick, 1811; Rokeby, 1813; The Bridal of Triermain, 1813; Abstract of Eyrbiggia Saga, in Jamieson's Northern Antiquities, 1814; Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since, 1814; Life of Swift (prefixed to works), 1814; The Lord of the Isles, 1815; Guy Mannering, 1815; The Field of Waterloo, 1815; Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk, 1815; The Antiquary, 1816; Tales of my Landlord (Black Dwarf, Old Mortality), 1817 (1816); Harold the Dauntless, 1817; The Search after Happiness, or the Quest of Sultan Solimaun, 1817; Rob Roy, 1818; Tales of my Landlord (Heart of Midlothian), 1818; The Bride of Lammermoor, 1819; Description of the Regalia of Scotland, 1819; Ivanhoe, 1820; The Monastery, 1820; The Abbot, 1820; Kenilworth, 1821; Biographies in Ballantyne's Novelists, 1821; Account of George IV.'s Coronation, 1821; The Pirate, 1822; Halidon Hill, 1822; Macduff's Cross (Joanna Baillie's Poetical Miscellanies), 1822; The Fortunes of Nigel, 1822; Peveril of the Peak, 1822; Quentin Durward, 1823; St. Ronan's Well, 1824; Redgauntlet, 1824; Tales of the Crusaders; The Betrothed; The Talisman, 1825; Woodstock, or the Cavaliers: A Tale of 1651, 1826; Life of Napoleon Buonaparte, 1827; Chronicles of the Canongate; The Two Drovers; The Highland Widow; The Surgeon's Daughter, 1827; Tales of a Grandfather, 1st Series, 1828; 2nd Series, 1829; 3rd Series, 1830; 4th Series, 1830; Chronicles of the Canongate; St. Valentine's Day, or The Fair Maid of Perth, 1828; My Aunt Margaret's Mirror; The Tapestried Chamber; The Laird's Jock (Keepsake, 1828); Religious Discourses, by a Layman, 1828; Anne of Geierstein, 1829; History of Scotland (Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia), 1830; Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft, 1830; House of Aspen (Keepsake, 1830); Doom of Devorgoil; Auchindrane, or the Ayrshire Tragedy, 1830; Essays

on Ballad Poetry, 1830; Tales of My Landlord: Count Robert of Paris; Castle Dangerous, 1832.

Letters and Articles were contributed to Encyclopædia Britannica, 1814 (Chivalry; Drama); Provincial Antiquities of Scotland, 1819-1826; *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, 1820, 1826; as well as frequent articles to the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews*, and *Edinburgh Annual Register*.

Collected Poems.—1820, 1821, 1823, 1830 (with Author's Prefaces); 1834 (Lockhart).

Collected Novels.—1820 (Novels and Tales); 1822 (Historical Romances); 1824 (Historical Romances), 26 vols.; with Author's Notes, 1829-33, 48 vols.; People's Edition, 1844-8; Abbotsford, 1842-7; Roxburghe, 1859-61; Dryburgh, 1892-4; Border (A. Lang), 1892-4; The Temple Edition, edited by Clement K. Shorter, 1897.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Samuel Richardson	1
Henry Fielding	46
Tobias Smollett	71
Richard Cumberland	119
Oliver Goldsmith	144
Samuel Johnson	162
Laurence Sterne	170
Horace Walpole	188
Clara Reeve	204
Mrs. Ann Radcliffe	211
Alain Rene Le Sage	245
Charles Johnstone	268
Robert Bage	276
Henry Mackenzie	291
Charlotte Smith	303
Miss Anna Seward	335
Daniel de Foe	353
Appendix	386
Index	399

SCOTT'S
LIVES OF THE NOVELISTS

SAMUEL RICHARDSON

The life of this excellent man, and ingenious author, has been written, with equal spirit and candour, by Mrs. Barbauld, a name long dear to elegant literature, and is prefixed to her publication of the *Author's Correspondence*, published by Philips, in six volumes, in 1804. The leading circumstances of these simple annals are necessarily extracted from that performance, to which the present editor has no means of adding anything of consequence.

Samuel Richardson was born in Derbyshire, in the year 1689. His father, a joiner by profession, was one of many sons, sprung from a family of middling note, which had been so far reduced that the children were brought up to mechanical trades. His mother was also decently descended, but an orphan, left such in infancy by the death of both her parents, cut off within half an hour of each other by the great pestilence in 1663. Her name is not mentioned. Old Richardson was connected by employment with the unhappy Duke of Monmouth, after whose execution he retired to Shrewsbury, apprehensive, perhaps, of a fate similar to that of College, his brother-in-trade, well known in those times by the title of the Protestant Joiner, who was executed for high treason in the reign of Charles II.

Having sustained severe losses in trade, the elder Richardson was unable to give his son Samuel more than a very ordinary education; and our author, who was to rise so high in one department of literature, was left unacquainted with any language excepting his own. Under all these disadvantages, and perhaps in some degree owing to their existence, young Richardson very early followed, with a singular bias, the course which was most likely to render his name immortal. We give his own words, for they cannot be amended:—

"I recollect, that I was early noted for having invention. I

was not fond of play, as other boys: my school-fellows used to call me *Serious* and *Gravity;* and five of them particularly delighted to single me out, either for a walk, or at their fathers' houses, or at mine, to tell them stories, as they phrased it. Some I told them, from my reading, as true; others from my head, as mere invention; of which they would be most fond, and often were affected by them. One of them particularly, I remember, was for putting me to write a history, as he called it, on the model of Tommy Pots;[1] I now forget what it was, only that it was of a servant-man preferred by a fine young lady (for his goodness) to a lord, who was a libertine. All my stories carried with them, I am bold to say, an useful moral."[2]

But young Richardson found a still more congenial body of listeners among the female sex. An old lady, indeed, seems to have resented an admonitory letter, in which the future teacher of morals contrasted her pretensions to religion with her habitual indulgence in slander and backbiting; but with the young and sentimental his reception was more gracious. "As a bashful and not forward boy," he says, "I was an early favourite with all the young women of taste and reading in the neighbourhood. Half-a-dozen of them, when met to work with their needles, used, when they got a book they liked, and thought I should, to borrow me to read to them, their mothers sometimes with them; and both mothers and daughters used to be pleased with the observations they put me upon making. I was not more than thirteen,

[1] Tommy Potts is the name of an old ballad published in Ritsons' *Ancient Songs*.

[2] *Life of Richardson*, vol. i., p. 36, 37. [It is impossible to consider without delight and admiration the contrast between Richardson's boyish fictions and those of his biographer himself, as described in the general preface to the Waverley Novels. There Sir Walter Scott says, "I must refer to a very early period of my life, were I to point out my first achievements as a tale-teller, but I believe some of my old school-fellows can still bear witness that I had a distinguished character for that talent, at a time when the applause of my companions was my recompense for the disgraces and punishments which the future romance-writer incurred for being idle himself, and keeping others idle, during hours that should have been employed on our tasks. The chief enjoyment of my holidays was to escape with a chosen friend, who had the same taste with myself, and alternately to recite to each other such wild adventures as we were able to devise. We told, each in turn, interminable tales of knight-errantry, and battles, and enchantments, which were continued from one day to another as opportunity offered, without ever thinking of bringing them to a conclusion. As we observed a strict secrecy on the subject of this intercourse, it acquired all the character of a concealed pleasure, and we used to select, for the scenes of our indulgence, long walks through the solitary and romantic environs of Arthur's Seat, Salisbury Craigs, Braid Hills, and similar places in the vicinity of Edinburgh; and the recollection of those holidays still forms an *oasis* in the pilgrimage which I have to look back upon."]

when three of these young women, unknown to each other, having an high opinion of my taciturnity, revealed to me their love secrets, in order to induce me to give them copies to write after, or correct, for answers to their lovers' letters; nor did any one of them ever know that I was the secretary to the others. I have been directed to chide, and even repulse, when an offence was either taken or given, at the very time when the heart of the chider or repulser was open before me, overflowing with esteem and affection; and the fair repulser, dreading to be taken at her word, directing *this* word, or *that* expression, to be softened or changed. One, highly gratified with her lover's fervour, and vows of everlasting love, has said, when I have asked her direction, *I cannot tell you what to write;* but (her heart on her lips) *you cannot write too kindly.* All her fear was only, that she should incur slight for her kindness." [1]

His father had nourished some ambitious views of dedicating young Richardson to the ministry, but, as his circumstances denied him the means of giving him necessary education, Samuel was destined to that profession most nearly connected with literature, and was bound apprentice to Mr. John Wilde, of Stationers' Hall, in the year 1706. Industrious as well as intelligent, regulated in his habits, and diverted by no headstrong passion from the strictest course of duty, Richardson made rapid progress in his employment as a printer.

"I served," he says, "a diligent seven years to it; to a master who grudged every hour to me that tended not to his profit, even of those times of leisure and diversion, which the refractoriness of my fellow-servants *obliged* him to allow them, and were usually allowed by other masters to their apprentices. I stole from the hours of rest and relaxation my reading times for improvement of my mind; and, being engaged in a correspondence with a gentleman, greatly my superior in degree, and of ample fortune, who, had he lived, intended high things for me, those were all the opportunities I had in my apprenticeship to carry it on. But this little incident I may mention; I took care that

[1] *Life of Richardson*, vol. i., p. 39, 40. [Mrs. Barbauld adds, "Human nature is human nature in every class; the hopes and the fears, the perplexities and struggles, of these low-bred girls, in probably an obscure village, supplied the future author with those ideas which, by their gradual development, produced the characters of a Clarissa and a Clementina; nor was he probably happier, or amused in a more lively manner, when sitting in his grotto, with a circle of the best-informed women in England about him, who, in after times, courted his society, than in reading to these girls in, it may be, a little back shop, or a mantuamaker's parlour, with a brick floor."—Ibid. p. 40, 41.]

even my candle was of my own purchasing, that I might not, in the most trifling instance, make my master a sufferer (and who used to call me the pillar of his house), and not to disable myself by watching or sitting up, to perform my duty to him in the daytime." [1]

The correspondence betwixt Richardson and the gentleman who had so well selected an object of patronage, was voluminous; but at the untimely death of his friend, it was, by his particular desire, consigned to the flames.

Several years more were spent in the obscure drudgery of the printing-house ere Richardson took out his freedom, and set up as a master printer. His talents for literature were soon discovered; and, in addition to his proper business, he used to oblige the booksellers by furnishing them with prefaces, dedications, and such like garnishing of the works submitted to his press. He printed several of the popular periodical papers of the day, and at length, through the interest of Mr. Onslow, the Speaker, obtained the lucrative employment of printing the Journals of the House of Commons, by which he must have reaped considerable advantages, although he occasionally had to complain of delay of payment on the part of government.

Punctual in his engagements, and careful in the superintendence of his business—fortune, and respect, its sure accompaniment, began to flow in upon Richardson. In 1754, he was chosen Master of the Stationers' Company; and, in 1760, he purchased a moiety of the patent of Printer to the King, which seems to have added considerably to his revenue. He was now a man in very easy circumstances; and, besides his premises in Salisbury Court, he enjoyed the luxury of a villa, first at North End, near Hammersmith, afterwards at Parsons Green.

Richardson was twice married; first to Allington Wilde, his master's daughter, and after her death, in 1731, to the sister of James Leake, bookseller, who survived her distinguished husband. He has made a feeling commemoration of the family misfortunes which he sustained, in a letter to Lady Bradshaigh. "I told you, madam, that I have been married twice; both times happily: you will guess so, as to my first, when I tell you that I cherish the memory of my lost wife to this hour; and, as to the second, when I assure you that I can do so without derogating from the merits of, or being disallowed by, my present, who speaks of her, on all occasions, as respectfully and affectionately as I do myself.

[1] *Life of Richardson*, vol. i., p. 41, 42.

"By my first wife I had five sons and one daughter; some of them living, to be delightful prattlers, with all the appearances of sound health, lively in their features, and promising as to their minds; and the death of one of them, I doubt, accelerating, from grief, that of the otherwise laudably afflicted mother. I have had, by my present wife, five girls and one boy; I have buried of these the promising boy, and one girl: four girls I have living, all at present very good; their mother, a true and instructing mother to them.

"Thus have I lost six sons (all my sons) and two daughters, every one of which, to answer your question, I parted with with the utmost regret. Other heavy deprivations of friends, very near, and very dear, have I also suffered. I am very susceptible, I will venture to say, of impressions of this nature. A father, an honest, worthy father, I lost by the accident of a broken thigh, snapped by a sudden jirk, endeavouring to recover a slip passing through his own yard. My father, whom I attended in every stage of his last illness, I long mourned for. Two brothers, very dear to me, I lost abroad. A friend, more valuable than most brothers, was taken from me. No less than eleven affecting deaths in two years! My nerves were so affected with these repeated blows, that I have been forced, after trying the whole *materia medica,* and consulting many physicians, as the only palliative (not a remedy to be expected), to go into a regimen; and, for seven years past, have I forborne wine, and flesh, and fish; and, at this time, I and all my family are in mourning for a good-sister, with whom neither I would have parted, could I have had my choice. From these affecting dispensations, will you not allow me, madam, to remind an unthinking world, immersed in pleasures, what a life this is that they are so fond of, and to arm them against the affecting changes of it?"[1]

But this amiable and excellent man was not deprived of the most pleasing exercise of his affections, notwithstanding the breaches which had been made among his offspring. Four daughters survived to discharge those duties which the affectionate temper of their father rendered peculiarly precious to him. Mary was married during her father's lifetime to Mr. Ditcher, a respectable surgeon at Bath. Martha, who had been his principal amanuensis, became, after his decease, the wife of Edward Bridgen, Esq., and Sarah married Mr. Crowther, surgeon, in Boswell's Court. Anne, a woman of a most amiable disposition, but whose weak health had often alarmed the affections of her

[1] *Life of Richardson,* vol. i., p. 48, 49, 50.

parents, survived, nevertheless, her sisters, as well as her parents. A nephew of Richardson's paid him, in his declining years, the duties of a son, and assisted him in the conducting of his business; which concludes all it is necessary to say concerning the descendants and connections of this distinguished author.

The private life of Richardson has nothing to detain the biographer. We have mentioned the successive opportunities, which, cautiously yet ably improved, led him to eminence in his highly respectable profession, by that slow but secure progress, which has nothing in it to arrest attention, or to gratify curiosity. He was unceasingly industrious; led astray by no idle views of speculation, and seduced by no temptations to premature expenditure. Industry brought independence, and, finally, wealth in its train; and that well-won fortune was husbanded with prudence, and expended with liberality. A kind and generous master, he was eager to encourage his servants to persevere in the same course of patient labour by which he had himself attained fortune; and it is said to have been his common practice to hide half-a-crown among the types, that it might reward the diligence of the workman who should first be in the office in the morning. His hospitality was of the most liberal, as well as the most judicious kind. One of his correspondents describes him as sitting at his door like an old patriarch, and inviting all who passed by to enter, and be refreshed; and this, says Mrs. Barbauld, "whether they brought with them the means of amusing their host, or only required his kind notice, and that of his family." He was generous and benevolent to distressed authors, a class of men with whom his profession brought him into contact; and had occasion, more than once, to succour Dr. Johnson during his days of poverty,[1] and to assist his efforts to force himself into public notice. The domestic revolutions of his life, after mentioning the losses he had sustained in his family, may be almost summed up in two great events. He changed his villa, in which he indulged, like other wealthy citizens, from North End to Parsons Green; and his printing establishment, from the one side of Salisbury Court to the other; which last alteration, he complains, did not meet Mrs. Richardson's approbation.

If we look yet closer into Richardson's private life (and who loves not to know the slightest particulars concerning a man of

[1] [Johnson seems to have been, on one occasion at least, bailed out of a spunging-house by Richardson, and to have been in the habit of applying to him for small loans of money, when his immediate employers were out of the way. See the first volume of *Boswell*.]

his genius?) we find so much to praise, and so very little deserving censure, that we almost think we are reading the description of one of the amiable characters he has drawn in his own works. A love of the human species; a desire to create happiness and to witness it; a life undisturbed by passion, and spent in doing good; pleasures which centred in elegant conversation, in bountiful hospitality, in the exchange of all the kindly intercourse of life, marked the worth and unsophisticated simplicity of the good man's character. He loved children, and knew the rare art of winning their attachment; for, partaking in that respect the sagacity of the canine race, they are not to be deceived by dissembled attention. A lady, who shared the hospitality of Richardson, and gives an excellent account of the internal regulations of his virtuous and orderly family, remembers creeping to his knee, and hanging on his words, as well as the good-nature with which he backed her petitions, to be permitted to remain a little longer when she was summoned to bed, and his becoming her guarantee that she would not require the servant's assistance to put her to bed, and to extinguish the candle. Trifling as these recollections may seem, they are pleasing proofs that the author of *Clarissa* was, in private life, the mild good man which we wish to suppose him.

The predominant failing of Richardson seems certainly to have been vanity; vanity naturally excited by his great and unparalleled popularity at home and abroad, and by the continual and concentred admiration of the circle in which he lived. Such a weakness finds root in the mind of every one who has obtained general applause, but Richardson, the gentleness of whose mind was almost feminine, was peculiarly susceptible of this feminine weakness, and he fostered and indulged its growth, which a man of firmer character would have crushed and restrained. The cup of Circe converted men into beasts; and that of praise, when deeply and eagerly drained, seldom fails to make wise men in some degree fools. There seems to have been a want of masculine firmness in Richardson's habits of thinking, which combined with his natural tenderness of heart in inducing him to prefer the society of women; and women, from the quickness of their feelings, as well as their natural desire to please, are always the admirers, or rather the idolaters, of genius, and generally its willing flatterers. Richardson was in the daily habit of seeing, conversing, and corresponding with many of the fair sex; and the unvaried, and, it would seem, the inexhaustible theme, was his own writings. Hence, Johnson,

whose lofty pride never suffered him to cherish the meaner foible of vanity, has passed upon Richardson, after a just tribute to his worth, the severe sentence recorded by Boswell: "I only remember," says the biographer, "that Johnson expressed a high value for his talents and virtues: But that his perpetual study was to ward off petty inconveniences, and to procure petty pleasures; that his love of continual superiority was such, that he took care always to be surrounded by women, who listened to him implicitly, and did not venture to contradict his opinions; and that his desire of distinction was so great, that he used to give large vails to Speaker Onslow's servants, that they might treat him with respect." [1] An anecdote, which seems to confirm Johnson's statement, is given by Boswell, on authority of a lady who was present when the circumstance took place. A gentleman, who had lately been at Paris, sought, while in a large company at Richardson's villa at North End, to gratify the landlord, by informing him that he had seen his *Clarissa* lying on the king's brother's table.[2] Richardson observing that a part of the company were engaged in conversation apart, affected not to hear what had been said, but took advantage of the first general pause, to address the gentleman with—"Sir, I think you were saying something about"—and then stopped, in a flutter of expectation; which his guest mortified, by replying, "A mere trifle, sir, not worth repeating." [3]

The truth seems to be, that Richardson, by nature shy, and of a nervous constitution, limited also by a very narrow education, cared not to encounter in conversation with those rougher spirits of the age, where criticism might have had too much

[1] *Life of Richardson,* vol. i., p. 171, 172.—This character was given at the house of a venerable Scottish judge, now no more, who was so great an admirer of *Sir Charles Grandison,* that he was said to have read that work over once every year in the course of his life.

[2] ["Mr. Northcote relates, that Johnson introduced Sir Joshua Reynolds and his sister to Richardson, but hinted to them, at the same time, that, if they wished to see the latter in good humour, they must expatiate on the excellences of *Clarissa;* and Mrs. Piozzi tells us that, when talking of Richardson, he once said, 'You think I love flattery—and so I do; but a little too much always disgusts me: that fellow Richardson, on the contrary, could not be contented to sail quietly down the stream of reputation, without longing to taste the froth from every stroke of the oar.'"—Croker's *Boswell,* vol. i., p. 210.]

[3] Johnson himself felt pride on finding his Dictionary in Lord Scarsdale's dressing-room, and pointed it out to his friend, with the classical quotation, *Quæ terra nostri non plena laboris?* Yet, under correction of both these great authors, the more substantial fame is to find a popular work, not in the closet of the great, who buy every book which bears a name, but in the cabins of the poor, who must have made some sacrifice to effect the purchase.

severity in it. And he seems to have been reserved even in the presence of Johnson, though bound to him by obligation, and although that mighty aristarch professed to have the talent of "making him rear," and of calling forth his powers.[1] Nor does he appear to have associated much with any of the distinguished genuises of the age, saving Dr. Young, with whom he corresponded late in life. Aaron Hill, who patriotically endeavoured to make him a convert to wines of British manufacture; and Mr. Edwards, author of the *Canons of Criticism*, though both clever men, do not deserve to be mentioned as exceptions.

The society of Richardson was limited to a little circle of amiable and accomplished persons, who were contented to allow a central position to the author of *Clarissa*, and to revolve around him in inferior orbits. The families of Highmore and Duncombe produced more than one individual of this description; and besides Mrs. Donellan, and the Miss Fieldings, whom Richardson loved, notwithstanding the offences of their brother, there was a Miss Mulso, Miss Westcombe, and other ladies besides, full of veneration for the kind instructor, whom they were permitted to term their adopted father. Mrs. Charlotte Lennox was also a regular visitor at Parsons Green, and scarce could remember a visit in which her host had not rehearsed at least one, but probably two or three, voluminous letters, if he found her in the humour of listening with attention.

While *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison* were in progress, Richardson used to read a part of his labours to some of this chosen circle every morning, and receive, it may readily be supposed, a liberal tribute of praise, with a very moderate portion of criticism. Miss Highmore, who inherited a paternal taste for painting, has recorded one of those scenes in a small drawing, where Richardson, in a morning-gown and cap, is introduced reading the manuscript of *Sir Charles Grandison* to such a little group.

This was all very amiable, though perhaps bordering on an effeminate love of flattery and applause; but it must be owned

[1] ["Richardson had little conversation except about his own works, of which Sir Joshua Reynolds said he was always willing to talk, and glad to have them introduced. Johnson, when he carried Mr. Langton to see him, professed that he could bring him out into conversation, and used this allusive expression—'Sir, I can make him *rear*.' But he failed; for, in that interview, Richardson said little else than that there lay in the room a translation of his *Clarissa* into German."—Croker's *Boswell*, vol. v., p. 360.]

that our author disdained not flattery from less pure hands than those of his ordinary companions. We will not dwell upon poor Lætitia Pilkington, whose wants, rather than her extravagant praises, may be supposed to have conciliated the kindness of Richardson, notwithstanding the infamy of her character;[1] but we are rather scandalised that the veteran iniquity of old Cibber should not have excluded him from the intimacy of the virtuous Richardson, and that the grey profligate could render himself acceptable to the author of *Sir Charles Grandison* by such effusions of vulgar vivacity as the following, which we cannot forbear inserting: "I have just finished the sheets you favoured me with; but never found so strong a proof of your sly ill-nature, as to have hung me up upon tenters till I see you again. Z—ds! I have not patience, till I know what's become of her.—Why, you! I don't know what to call you!—Ah! ah! you may laugh if you please: but how will you be able to look me in the face, if the lady should ever be able to show *hers* again? What piteous, d—d, disgraceful pickle have you plunged her in? For God's sake send me the sequel; or —I don't know what to say!"[2] Yet another delectable quotation from the letters of that merry old good-for-nothing, which, as addressed by a rake of the theatre to the most sentimental author of the age, and as referring to one of his favourite and most perfect characters, is, in its way, a matchless specimen of elegant vivacity. "The delicious meal I made of Miss Byron on Sunday last, has given me an appetite for another slice of her, off from the spit, before she is served up to the public table; if about five o'clock to-morrow afternoon will not be inconvenient, Mrs. Brown and I will come and piddle upon a bit more of her: but pray let your whole family, with Mrs. Richardson at the head of them, come in for their share."[3]

An appetite for praise, and an over-indulgence of that appetite, not only teaches an author to be gratified with the applause of the unworthy, and to prefer it to the censure of the wise, but it leads to the less pardonable error of begrudging others their due share of public favour. Richardson was too good, too kind a man to let literary envy settle deep in his bosom, yet

[1] ["See *Mrs. Pilkington's Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 238; and Nicoll's *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iv., p. 583. It may be worth noting, that Lætitia describes herself as calling on Richardson in an undress, 'never having formed any great idea of a printer by those she had seen in Ireland,' and being 'extremely surprised when she was directed to a house of very grand outward appearance.'"]

[2] *Correspondence of Richardson*, vol. ii., p. 172, 173.

[3] Ibid., vol. ii., p. 176.

an overweening sense of his own importance seems to have prevented his doing entire justice to the claims of those who might be termed his rivals. He appears to have been rather too prone to believe ill of those authors, against whose works exceptions, in point of delicacy, might justly be taken. He has inserted in his Correspondence an account of Swift's earlier life, highly injurious to the character of that eminent writer, and which the industry of Dr. Barrett has since shown to be a gross misrepresentation. The same tone of feeling has made him denounce, with the utmost severity, the indecorum of *Tristram Shandy*, without that tribute of applause which, in every view of the case, was so justly due to the genius of the author, and which would have come with particular propriety from Richardson, himself a master of the pathetic style of composition. Richardson seems also to have joined Aaron Hill in the cuckoo-song, that Pope had written himself out; and, finally, the dislike which he manifests towards Fielding, though it originated in a gratuitous insult on the part of the latter, breaks out too often, and is too anxiously veiled under an affectation of charity and candour, not to lead us to suspect that the author of *Tom Jones* was at least as obnoxious to Richardson through the success, as from the alleged immorality, of his productions. It would have been generous in the wealthier and happier of these competitors for public fame, to have reflected that, while his own bark lay safe in harbour, or was wafted on by the favouring gale of applause, his less fortunate rival had to struggle with the current and the storm. But as this disagreeable subject will be found canvassed in Fielding's Life, we will not farther dwell on it here. Of all pictures of literary life, that which exhibits two men, of transcendent, though different talents, engaged in the depreciation of each other, is most humbling to human nature, most unpleasing to a candid and enlightened reader. Excepting against Fielding, Richardson seems to have nourished no positive literary feud. But it is to be regretted that, in his Correspondence, we find few traces that he either loved or admired contemporary genius.[1]

[1] [Lord Byron, on finding some sheets of *Pamela* applied to "base uses," at Ravenna, in 1821, thus writes: "What would Richardson, the vainest and luckiest of *living* authors (*i.e.* while alive)—he who, with Aaron Hill, used to prophesy and chuckle over the presumed fall of Fielding (the *prose* Homer of human nature) and of Pope (the most beautiful of poets)—what would he have said, could he have traced his pages from their place on the French princes' toilets (see *Boswell*) to the grocer's counter and the gipsy-murderess's bacon! ! ! What would he have said? What can anybody say, save what *Solomon said long before us?* After all, it is but passing

It may appear invidious to dwell thus long on a sufficiently venial speck in a character so fair and amiable. But it is no useless lesson to show that a love of praise, and a feeling of literary emulation, not to say vanity, foibles pardonable in themselves, and rarely separated from the poetical temperament, lead to consequences detrimental to the deserved reputation of the most ingenious author, and the most worthy man, as a dead fly will pollute the most precious unguent. Every author, but especially those who cultivate the lighter kinds of literature, should teach themselves the stern lesson, that their art must fall under the frequent censure, *Non est tanti;* and, for this reason, they should avoid, as they would the circle of Alcina, that sort of society, who so willingly form around every popular writer an atmosphere of assentation and flattery, and represent his labours as a matter of great consequence to the world, and his popularity as a matter to be defended on all occasions, and against all rivals.

Dismissing these considerations, we cannot omit to state that Richardson's correspondence with one of his most intelligent and enthusiastic admirers, commenced, and was for some time carried on, in a manner which might have formed a pleasing incident in one of the author's own romances. This was Lady Bradshaigh, the wife of Sir Roger Bradshaigh, of Haigh, in Lancashire, whose very considerable talent, and ardent taste for literature, had to contend with the prejudices which in those days seem to have rendered it ridiculous for a lady of rank and fashion, the wife of a country gentleman of estate and consideration, to enter into correspondence with a professed author. To gratify the strong propensity she felt to engage in literary intercourse with an author of Richardson's distinction, Lady Bradshaigh had recourse to the romantic expedient of commencing the correspondence with him under an assumed name. Thus, with all the precautions against discovery which are sometimes resorted to for less honest purposes, Richardson and his incognita maintained a close exchange of letters, until they seem on both sides to have grown desirous of becoming personally known to each other; and the author was induced to walk in the Park at a particular hour, and to send an accurate description of his person, that his fair correspondent might be

from one counter to another—from the bookseller's to the other tradesman's—grocer or pastry-cook. For my part, I have met with most poetry upon trunks; so that I am apt to consider the trunk-maker as the sexton of authorship."—*Life and Works*, vol. v., p. 55.]

able, herself unknown, to distinguish him from the vulgar herd of passengers. The following portrait exhibits all the graphical accuracy with which the author was accustomed to detail the appearance of his imaginary personages, and is at the same time very valuable, as it describes the external appearance of a man of genius, in whom great powers of observing life and manners were combined with bashful and retired habits.

"I go through the Park," says Richardson, "once or twice a-week to my little retirement; but I will, for a week together, be in it every day three or four hours, at your command, till you tell me you have seen a person who answers to this description; namely, Short; rather plump than emaciated, notwithstanding his complaints; about five foot five inches; fair wig; lightish cloth coat, all black besides; one hand generally in his bosom, the other a cane in it, which he leans upon under the skirts of his coat usually, that it may imperceptibly serve him as a support, when attacked by sudden tremors or startings, and dizziness, which too frequently attack him, but, thank God, not so often as formerly; looking directly fore-right, as passers-by would imagine, but observing all that stirs on either hand of him without moving his short neck; hardly ever turning back; of a light brown complexion; teeth not yet failing him; smoothish-faced, and ruddy-cheeked: at sometimes looking to be about sixty-five, at other times much younger; a regular even pace, stealing away ground, rather than seeming to rid it: a grey eye, too often over-clouded by mistiness from the head; by chance lively; very lively it will be, if he have hope of seeing a lady whom he loves and honours; his eye always on the ladies; if they have very large hoops, he looks down and supercilious, and as if he would be thought wise, but perhaps the sillier for that: as he approaches a lady, his eye is never fixed first upon her face, but upon her feet, and thence he raises it up, pretty quickly for a dull eye; and one would think (if we thought him at all worthy of observation) that from her air and (the last beheld) her face, he sets her down in his mind as *so* or *so*, and then passes on to the next object he meets; only then looking back, if he greatly likes or dislikes, as if he would see if the lady appear to be all of a piece, in the one light or in the other. Are these marks distinct enough, if you are resolved to keep all the advantages you set out with? And from this odd, this grotesque figure, think you, madam, that you have anything to apprehend? Anything that will not rather promote than check your mirth? I dare be bold to say

(and allow it too) that you would rather see this figure than any other you ever saw, whenever you should find yourself graver than you wish to be." [1]

Lady Bradshaigh, like other ladies upon similar occasions, could not resist the opportunity of exercising a little capricious tyranny. Richardson's walks in the Park were for some time unnoticed. Both parties seem to have indulged in a gentle coquetry, until both were likely to lose temper, and the complaints on the gentleman's side became a little keen and eager. At length, Lady Bradshaigh dropped the mask, and continued afterwards to be in her own person the valued correspondent of the author. It is but justice to say that the sense and spirit with which she supports her own views, even when contrary to those of Richardson, render her letters the most agreeable in the collection, and constitute a great difference betwixt her and some others of the author's female correspondents, who are satisfied with becoming the echoes of his sentiments and opinions. Lady Bradshaigh had a sister, Lady Echlin, who also corresponded with Richardson; but although she appears to have been an excellent woman, her letters want both the vivacity and talent displayed in those of Lady Bradshaigh. Yet Lady Echlin, too, had her moments of ambitious criticism. She even tried her hand at reforming Lovelace, as Mrs. Barbauld informs us, by the aid of a Dr. Christian; a consummation, as the reader will anticipate, much better meant than successfully executed.

Neither the admiration of the public, the applause of admirers, nor the deserved affection of his friends and family, could screen this amiable author from his share in the lot of humanity. Besides his family misfortunes, Richardson was afflicted with indifferent health, in the painful shape of nervous disorders. Sedentary habits, and close attention to business, had rendered a constitution delicate, which nature had never made strong; and it will readily be believed that the workings of an imagination, constantly labouring in the fields of fiction, increased, rather than relieved complaints, which affected his nerves at an early period. If, as he somewhere says, he made the distress of his characters his own, and wept for Clarissa, and Clementina, as if they had not been the creatures of his own fancy, the exhaustion of his spirits must have exasperated his malady. His nerves were latterly so much shaken that he could not convey a glass of wine to his mouth, unless it was put into a

[1] *Correspondence of Richardson*, vol. iv., p. 290, 291, 292.

large tumbler; and becoming unable to undergo the fatigue of conversing with the principal superintendent of his business, who chanced unluckily to be hard of hearing, all communication between them was maintained by means of writing. He did not long survive the space assigned by the Psalmist as the ordinary duration of human life. On the 4th July, 1761, Samuel Richardson died, aged seventy-two, and was buried, according to his own directions, beside his first wife, in the middle aisle of St. Bride's Church, followed by the affectionate grief of those who were admitted to his society, and the sorrow of all who mourned over talents uniformly and conscientiously dedicated to the service of virtue. The following epitaph was written by his learned friend, Mrs. Carter, but is not, we believe, inscribed on his tomb.

" If ever warm benevolence was dear,
If ever wisdom gain'd esteem sincere,
Or genuine fancy deep attention won,
Approach with awe the dust—of Richardson.
What though his muse, through distant regions known,
Might scorn the tribute of this humble stone;
Yet pleasing to his gentle shade, must prove
The meanest pledge of Friendship, and of Love;
For oft will these, from venal throngs exiled,
And oft will innocence, of aspect mild,
And white-robed Charity, with streaming eyes,
Frequent the cloister where their patron lies.
This, reader, learn; and learn from one whose woe
Bids her wild verse in artless accents flow:
For, could she frame her numbers to commend
The husband, father, citizen, and friend;
How would her muse display, in equal strain,
The critic's judgment, and the writer's vein!—
Ah, no! expect not from the chisel'd stone
The praises, graven on our hearts alone.
There shall his fame a lasting shrine acquire;
And ever shall his moving page inspire
Pure truth, fixt honour, virtue's pleasing lore,
While taste and science crown this favour'd shore." [1]

Richardson's character as a man, after all deductions have been made for circumstances and for human frailty, cannot be too highly estimated. It remains only to consider him as an author, and, for this purpose, to review his literary career, and the productions which it gave rise to.

It was by mere accident that Richardson appears to have struck

[1] *Life of Richardson*, vol. i., p. 212.

out the line of composition so peculiarly adapted to his genius. He had at all times the pen of a ready correspondent; and, from his early age, had, as we have seen, been accustomed to lend it to others, and to write, of course, under different characters from his own. There can be no doubt that, in the service of the young women who employed him as their amanuensis and confidant, this natural talent must have been considerably improved; and as little that the exercise of such a power was pleasing to the possessor. Chance at length occasioned its being employed in the service of the public. The account will be best given in the words of his own letter to Aaron Hill, who, in common with the public at large, had become pressingly anxious to know if there was any foundation in fact for the history of Pamela.

"I will now write to your question—Whether there was any original groundwork of fact, for the general foundation of Pamela's story.

"About twenty-five years ago, a gentleman, with whom I was intimately acquainted, but who, alas! is now no more! [probably the "correspondent of fortune and rank," mentioned p. 7] met with such a story as that of Pamela, in one of the summer tours which he used to take for his pleasure, attended with one servant only. At every inn he put up at, it was his way to inquire after curiosities in its neighbourhood, either ancient or modern; and particularly he asked who was the owner of a fine house, as it seemed to him, beautifully situated, which he had passed by (describing it), within a mile or two of the inn.

"It was a fine house, the landlord said. The owner was Mr. B——, a gentleman of a large estate in more counties than one. That his and his lady's history engaged the attention of everybody who came that way, and put a stop to all other enquiries, though the house and gardens were well worth seeing. The lady, he said, was one of the greatest beauties in England; but the qualities of her mind had no equal; beneficent, prudent, and equally beloved and admired by high and low. That she had been taken at twelve years of age, for the sweetness of her manners and modesty, and for an understanding above her years, by Mr. B——'s mother, a truly worthy lady, to wait on her person. Her parents, ruined by suretiships, were remarkably honest and pious, and had instilled into their daughter's mind the best principles. When their misfortunes happened first, they attempted a little school, in their village, where they were much

beloved; he teaching writing, and the first rules of arithmetic, to boys; his wife plain needle-work to girls, and to knit and spin; but that it answered not: and, when the lady took their child, the industrious man earned his bread by day labour, and the lowest kind of husbandry.

"That the girl, improving daily in beauty, modesty, and genteel and good behaviour, by the time she was fifteen, engaged the attention of her lady's son, a young gentleman of free principles, who, on her lady's death, attempted, by all manner of temptations and devices, to seduce her. That she had recourse to as many innocent stratagems to escape the snares laid for her virtue—once, however, in despair, having been near drowning—that at last, her noble resistance, watchfulness, and excellent qualities, subdued him, and he thought fit to make her his wife. That she behaved herself with so much dignity, sweetness, and humility, that she made herself beloved of everybody, and even by his relations, who at first despised her; and now had the blessings both of rich and poor, and the love of her husband.

"The gentleman who told me this, added, that he had the curiosity to stay in the neighbourhood from Friday to Sunday, that he might see this happy couple at church, from which they never absented themselves: that, in short, he did see them; that her deportment was all sweetness, ease, and dignity mingled; that he never saw a lovelier woman: that her husband was as fine a man, and seemed even proud of his choice; and that she attracted the respects of the persons of rank present, and had the blessings of the poor. The relater of the story told me all this with transport.

"This, sir, was the foundation of Pamela's story; but little did I think to make a story of it for the press. That was owing to this occasion.

"Mr. Rivington and Mr. Osborne, whose names are on the titlepage, had long been urging me to give them a little book (which, they said, they were often asked after) of familiar letters on the useful concerns in common life; and, at last, I yielded to their importunity, and began to recollect such subjects as I thought would be useful in such a design, and formed several letters accordingly. And, among the rest, I thought of giving one or two as cautions to young folk circumstanced as Pamela was. Little did I think, at first, of making one, much less two volumes of it. But, when I began to recollect what had, so many years before, been told me by my friend, I thought the story, if written in an easy and natural manner, suitable to the

simplicity of it, might possibly introduce a new species of writing that might possibly turn young people into a course of reading different from the pomp and parade of romance-writing, and, dismissing the improbable and marvellous, with which novels generally abound, might tend to promote the cause of religion and virtue. I therefore gave way to enlargement; and so Pamela became as you see her. But so little did I hope for the approbation of judges, that I had not the courage to send the two volumes to your ladies, until I found the books well received by the public.

"While I was writing the two volumes, my worthy-hearted wife, and the young lady who is with us, when I had read them some part of the story, which I had begun without their knowing it, used to come in to my little closet every night, with—'Have you any more of Pamela, Mr. R.? We are come to hear a little more of Pamela,' etc. This encouraged me to prosecute it, which I did so diligently, through all my other business, that, by a memorandum on my copy, I began it November 10, 1739, and finished it January 10, 1739-40. And I have often, censurable as I might be thought for my vanity for it, and lessening to the taste of my two female friends, had the story of Moliere's *Old Woman* in my thoughts upon the occasion.

"If justly low were my thoughts of this little history, you will wonder how it came by such an assuming and very impudent preface. It was thus:—The approbation of these two female friends, and of two more, who were so kind as to give me prefaces for it, but which were much too long and circumstantial, as I thought, made me resolve myself on writing a preface; I therefore, spirited by the good opinion of these four, and knowing that the judgments of nine parts in ten of readers were but in hanging-sleeves, struck a bold stroke in the preface you see, having the umbrage of the editor's character [1] to screen myself behind. And thus, sir, all is out."

[1] Under the character of the editor, he gave great commendations to the letters, for which he was blamed by some of his friends. ["The extreme delight which Richardson felt on a review of his own works, the works themselves witness. Each is an evidence of what some will deem a violent literary vanity. To *Pamela* is prefixed a *letter* from the *editor* (whom we know to be the *author*), consisting of one of the most minutely laboured panegyrics of the work itself, that even the blindest idolater of some ancient classic paid to the object of his phrenetic imagination. In several places there, he contrives to repeat the striking parts of the narrative, which display the fertility of his imagination to great advantage. To the author's own edition of his *Clarissa* is appended an *alphabetical arrangement* of the *sentiments* dispersed throughout the work; and such was the fondness that dictated this voluminous arrangement, that such trivial aphorisms as

Pamela, of which the reader has thus learned the origin, appeared in 1740, and made a most powerful sensation in the public. Hitherto, romances had been written, generally speaking, in the old French taste, containing the protracted amours of princes and princesses, told in language coldly extravagant, and metaphysically absurd. In these wearisome performances, there appeared not the most distant allusion to the ordinary tone of feeling, the slightest attempt to paint mankind as it exists in the ordinary walks of life—all was rant and bombast, stilt and buskin. It will be Richardson's eternal praise, did he merit no more, that he tore from his personages those painted vizards, which concealed, under a clumsy and affected disguise, everything like the natural lineaments of the human countenance, and placed them before us bare-faced, in all the actual changes of feature and complexion, and all the light and shade of human passion. It requires a reader to be in some degree acquainted with the huge folios of inanity, over which our ancestors yawned themselves to sleep, ere he can estimate the delight they must have experienced from this unexpected return to truth and nature.

The simplicity of Richardson's tale aided the effect of surprise. An innocent young woman, whose virtue a dissolute master assails by violence, as well as all the milder means of seduction, conquers him at last, by persevering in the paths of rectitude; and is rewarded by being raised to the station of his wife, the lawful participator in his rank and fortune. Such is the simple story by which the world was so much surprised and affected.

The judicious criticism of Mrs. Barbauld has pointed out that the character of Pamela is far from attaining a heroic cast of excellence. On the contrary, there is a strain of cold-blooded prudence which runs through all the latter part of the novel, to which we are obliged almost to deny the name of virtue. She appears originally to have had no love for Mr. B——; no passion to combat in her own bosom; no treachery to subdue in the garrison while the enemy was before the walls. Richardson volun-

'habits are not easily changed,' 'men are known by their companions, etc., seem alike to be the object of their author's admiration. This collection of sentiments, said indeed to have been sent him anonymously, is curious and useful, and shows the value of the work, by the extensive grasp of that mind, which could think so justly on such numerous topics. And in his third and final labours, to each volume of *Sir Charles Grandison* is not only prefixed a complete *index*, with as much exactness, as if it were a history of England, but there is also appended a list of the *similes* and allusions in the volume, some of which do not exceed *three* or *four*, in nearly as many hundred pages."—D'Israeli.]

tarily evaded giving this colouring to his tale, because it was intended more for edification than for effect; and because the example of a *soubrette* falling desperately in love with a handsome young master might have been imitated by many in that rank of life, who could not have defended themselves exactly like Pamela against the object of so dangerous a passion. Besides, Richardson was upon principle unwilling to exhibit his favoured characters as greatly subject to violent passion of any kind, and was much disposed to dethrone Cupid, whom romance-writers had installed as the literal sovereign of gods and men. Still, the character of Pamela is somewhat sunk by the eager gratitude with which she accepts the hand of a tyrannical and cruel master, when he could not at a cheaper rate make himself master of her person. There is a parade of generosity on his side, and a humiliating degree of creeping submission on hers, which the case by no means calls for, and unless, like her namesake in Pope's Satire, Pamela could console herself with the "gilt chariot and the Flanders mares," we should have thought her more likely to be happy as the humble wife of poor Mr. Williams, of whose honest affection she makes somewhat too politic a use in the course of her trials, and whom she discards too coolly when better prospects seem to open upon her.

It is, perhaps, invidious to enter too closely upon the general tendency of a work of entertainment. But when the admirers of *Pamela* challenged for that work the merit of doing more good than twenty sermons,[1] we must demur to the motion. Its good effects must of course have operation among young women in circumstances somewhat similar to those of the heroine; and, in that rank, it may be questioned, whether the example is not as well calculated to encourage a spirit of rash enterprise, as of virtuous resistance. If Pamela became Esquire B——'s lady, it was only on account of her virtuous resistance to his criminal attacks; but it may occur to a humble maiden (and the case we believe is not hypothetical), that to merit Pamela's reward, she

[1] ["This publication, we are told, which made its first appearance in 1740, was received with a burst of applause. Dr. Sherlock recommended it from the pulpit. Mr. Pope said it would do more good than twenty volumes of sermons; and another literary oracle declared that, if all other books were to be burnt, *Pamela* and the Bible should be preserved. Its success was not less brilliant in the world of fashion. 'Even at Ranelah,' Mrs. Barbauld assures us, 'it was usual for the ladies to hold up the volumes to one another, to show they had got the book that every one was talking of.' And, what will appear still more extraordinary, one gentleman declares, that he will give it to his son as soon as he can read, that he may have an early impression of virtue."—*Edinburgh Review*, October, 1804.]

must go through Pamela's trials; and there can be no great harm in affording some encouragement to the assailant. We need not add how dangerous this experiment must be for both parties.

But we have elsewhere intimated an opinion that the direct and obvious moral to be deduced from a fictitious narrative is of much less consequence to the public than the mode in which the story is treated in the course of its details. If the author introduces scenes which excite evil passions, if he familiarises the mind of the readers with impure ideas, or sophisticates their understanding with false views of morality, it will be an unavailing defence, that, in the end of his book, he has represented virtue as triumphant. In the same manner, although some objections may be made to the deductions which the author desired and expected should be drawn from the story of *Pamela*, yet the pure and modest character of the English maiden is so well maintained during the work; her sorrows and afflictions are borne with so much meekness; her little intervals of hope or comparative tranquillity break in on her troubles so much like the specks of blue sky through a cloudy atmosphere, that the whole recollection is soothing, tranquillising, and doubtless edifying. We think little of Mr. B——, his character, or his motives, and are only delighted with the preferment of our favourite, because it seems to give so much satisfaction to herself. The pathetic passage, in which she describes her ineffectual attempt to escape, may be selected, among many, as an example of the beautiful propriety and truth with which the author was able to throw himself into the character of his heroine, and to think and reason, and express those thoughts and reasons, exactly as she must have done had the fictitious incident really befallen such a person.

The inferior persons are sketched with great truth, and may be considered as a group of English portraits of the period. In particular, the characters of the father and mother, old Andrews and his wife, are, like that of Pamela herself, in the very best style of drawing and colouring; and the interview of the former with his landlord, when he enquires after the fate of his daughter, would have immortalised Richardson, had he never wrote another line.

It may be here observed that, had the author lived in the present day, he would probably have thrown into the character of the deeply-injured peasant a spirit of manly indignation, which the occasion demanded. But in Richardson's time, the bonds of subordination in society were drawn very strictly, and

he himself appears to have had high and exaggerated ideas of the importance of wealth and rank, as well as of domestic authority of every kind. Mr. B—— does not seem to have incurred any severe censure among his neighbours for the villanies which he practises upon Pamela; she herself supposes them more than atoned for by his condescension in wedding her, and consents to receive into favour even the unwomanly and infamous Mrs. Jewkes, because the old procuress had acted a part she should have been hanged for, at the command, forsooth, of a generous master. There is want of taste in this humiliation; and a touch of spirit upon the occasion would not have misbecome even the all-forgiving Pamela.

Notwithstanding such defects, which, in fact, only occur to us upon a critical perusal, the pleasing simplicity of a tale so true to nature commanded the general and enthusiastic applause of the public. It was in vain that the mischievous wit of Fielding found a source for ridicule in that very simplicity of moral and of incident, and gave the world *Joseph Andrews*, an avowed parody upon the *Pamela* of Richardson. It chanced with that very humorous performance as with the *Shepherd's Week* of Gay, that readers lost sight altogether of the satirical purpose with which it was written, and were delighted with it on account of its own intrinsic merit. We may be permitted to regret, therefore, the tone of mind with which Fielding composed a work, in professed ridicule of such genius as that of Richardson; but how can we wish that undone, without which Parson Adams would not have existed?

The success of *Pamela* induced some wretched imitator to carry on the story in a continuation, entitled *Pamela in High Life*. This intrusion provoked Richardson to a similar attempt, in which he represents Pamela's husband as reclaimed from the prosecution of a guilty intrigue by the patient sorrows of his virtuous wife. The work met with the usual fate of continuations, and has been always justly accounted an unnatural and unnecessary appendage to a tale so complete within itself as the first part of *Pamela*.

Eight years after the appearance of *Pamela*, Richardson published *Clarissa*, the work on which his fame as a classic of England will rest for ever. The tale, like that of its predecessor, is very simple; but the scene is laid in a higher rank of life, the characters are drawn with a bolder pencil, and the whole accompaniments are of a far loftier mood.

Clarissa, a character as nearly approaching to perfection as the pencil of the author could draw, is persecuted by a tyrannical father and brother, an envious sister, and the other members of a family, who devoted everything to its aggrandisement, in order to compel her to marry a very disagreeable suitor. These intrigues and distresses she communicates, in a series of letters, to her friend Miss Howe, a young lady of an ardent, impetuous disposition, and an enthusiast in friendship. After a series of sufferings, rising almost beyond endurance, Clarissa is tempted to throw herself upon the protection of her admirer Lovelace, a character, in painting whom Richardson has exerted his utmost skill, until he has attained the very difficult and critical point, of rendering every reader pleased with his wit and abilities, even while detesting the villany of his conduct. Lovelace is represented as having devoted his life and his talents to the subversion of female virtue; and not even the charms of Clarissa, or the generosity due to her unprotected situation, can reconcile him to the idea of marriage. This species of perverted Quixotry is not much understood in the present age, when a modern voluptuary seeks the gratification of his passions where it is most easily obtained, and is seldom at the trouble of assault, when there is any probability of the fortress being resolutely defended. But in former days, when men, like Lord Baltimore, were found, at the risk of life itself, capable of employing the most violent means for the ruin of innocence, a character approaching that of Lovelace was not perhaps so unnatural. That he should have been so successful in previous amours, is not very probable; and as Mrs. Barbauld justly observes, he was more likely to have been run through the body long before ever he saw Colonel Morden. But some exaggeration must be allowed to the author of a romance; and considering the part which Lovelace had to perform, it was necessary that his character should be highly coloured. This perfidious lover, actuated, it would seem, as much by the love of intrigue and of enterprise, as by his desire to humble the Harlowe family, and lower the pride of this their beloved daughter, whose attachment to him was not of the devoted character which he conceived was due to his merits, forms a villanous scheme for the destruction of her virtue. Without the least regard for the character of a woman, whom he always seems to have intended for his wife at some future period, he contrives to lodge her with the keeper of a common brothel, and, to place around her the inmates of such a place. At length, every effort to accomplish his guilty purpose having

failed, he administers opiates, and violates the person of his victim while under their influence. But he obtains nothing by his crime, save infamy and remorse. The lady dies of a broken heart, and he himself falls by the sword of one of her kinsmen.

It cannot be denied that this story is attended with many improbabilities. Allowing for Lovelace's very peculiar character, admitting that his selfishness, his pride, and his love of intrigue, had hardened his heart to all consequences, surrounded it, as he himself says, "with flint and callus," and induced him to prefer a crooked and most foul path to one which was fair and honourable, there is no excuse for his correspondent Belford, as a man and a gentleman, keeping his friend's infamous secret. Nay, we are apt to blame Clarissa herself, who, in her escape to Hampstead, did not place herself under the guardianship of a magistrate. We will venture to say that Justice Fielding would have afforded her his most effectual protection; and that if Tomlinson, the false Miss Montague, or any other of Lovelace's agents, had ventured to appear in the office, they would have been committed by his worship as old acquaintances. In our own day too, though that was not a feature of the writer's age, the whole story of the elopement would have flown on the wings of the newspapers, not to Hampstead and Highgate only, but to Truro and Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and not a Mrs. Moore or a Mrs. Rawlins in England but would have been too particularly acquainted with "the mysterious affair of Harlowe Place," to be deceived by the representations of Lovelace. But it is unfair to tax an author too severely upon improbabilities, without conceding which his story could have no existence; and we have the less title to do so, because, in the history of real life, that which is actually true bears often very little resemblance to that which is probable. If every assault were skilfully parried, and every man played with ability, life would become like a trial of skill with foils, or like a game at chess, and strength and address would no longer be defeated by time and chance, which, in the words of Solomon, happen unto all men.

The conduct of the injured Clarissa through the subsequent scenes, which are perhaps among the most affecting and sublime in the English school of romance, raises her, in her calamitous condition, so far above all around her, that her character beams on the reader with something like superhuman splendour. Our eyes weep, our hearts ache; yet our feelings triumph with the triumph of virtue, as it rises over all the odds which the deepest

misfortune, and even degradation, have thrown into the scale. There is a noble pride amid the sorrow with which we contemplate the distresses of such a being as Clarissa, becoming more exalted over that personal dishonour, which, when it has once taken place, under what circumstances soever, is generally understood to infer degradation. It was reserved to Richardson to show there is a chastity of the soul, which can beam out spotless and unsullied even after that of the person has been violated; and the dignity of Clarissa, under her disgrace and her misfortunes, reminds us of the saying of the ancient poet, that a good man, struggling with the tide of adversity, and surmounting it, was a sight which the immortal gods might look down upon with pleasure. This is a subject which Mrs. Barbauld has dwelt upon with a suitable feeling of the dignity of her sex. The more contracted and limited view of Clarissa's merit, merely as resisting the efforts of a practised seducer, although it was unquestionably in Richardson's view, his biographer reasonably spurns as degrading to womanhood. Clarissa, bred in a superior rank in life, led astray by no strong passion, courted by a lover, who had immediate marriage in his power, must have been a subordinate person indeed, if incapable of repelling his attempts at dishonouring her person. I cannot avoid transcribing the excellent reflections which follow this reasoning: "The real moral of Clarissa is, that virtue is triumphant in every situation; that in circumstances the most painful and degrading, in a prison, in a brothel, in grief, in distraction, in despair, it is still lovely, still commanding, still the object of our veneration, of our fondest affections; that, if it is seated on the ground, it can still say with Constance,

'Here is my throne, bid kings come bow to it.'

"The Novelist that has produced this effect, has performed his office well, and it is immaterial what particular maxim is selected under the name of a moral while such are the reader's feelings. If our feelings are in favour of virtue, the novel is virtuous; if of vice, the novel is vicious. The greatness of Clarissa is shown by her separating herself from her lover, as soon as she perceives his dishonourable views; in her choosing death rather than a repetition of the outrage; in her rejection of those overtures of marriage, which a common mind might have accepted of, as a refuge against worldly dishonour; in her firm indignant carriage, mixed with calm patience and Christian

resignation, and in the greatness of mind with which she views and enjoys the approaches of death, and her meek forgiveness of her unfeeling relations." [1]

These arguments, however, were not at first readily admitted by Richardson's warmest admirers. The first four volumes of *Clarissa* having appeared, and a report having been spread that the catastrophe was to be unfortunate, many remonstrances were made on the subject by those readers who shrunk from the extreme pain inflicted by the tragical part of the narrative, and, laying aside the contemplation of the moral, complained that, in a professed work of amusement, the author had contrived to harrow up their feelings to a degree that was intolerably painful. Old Cibber raved on the subject like a profane Bedlamite; and what was perhaps of more consequence to Richardson, the rumour of Lovelace's success, and Clarissa's death, occasioned Lady Bradshaigh's opening her romantic correspondence with him, under the assumed name of Belfour. In reply to the expostulations of the latter, Richardson frankly stated his own noble plan, of which he had too just a conception to alter it, in compliance with the remonstrances of his correspondents.

"Indeed you are not *particular* in your wishes for a happy ending, as it is called. Nor can I go through some of the scenes myself without being sensibly touched. (Did I not say that I was another Pygmalion?) But yet I had to show, for example sake, a young lady struggling nobly with the greatest difficulties, and triumphing from the best motives, in the course of distresses, the tenth part of which would have sunk even manly hearts; yet tenderly educated, born to affluence, naturally meek, although, where an exertion of spirit was necessary, manifesting herself to be a true heroine." [2]

Defeated in this point, the friends and correspondents of Richardson became even more importunate for the reformation of Lovelace, and the winding up the story by his happy union with Clarissa. On this subject also, Cibber ranted and the ladies implored, with an earnestness that seems to imply at once a belief that the persons in whom they interested themselves had an existence, and that it was in the power of the writer of their memoirs to turn their destiny which way he pleased; and one damsel, eager for the conversion of Lovelace, implores Richardson to "save his soul;" as if there had been actually a living sinner in the case, and his future state had

[1] *Life of Richardson*, vol. i., p. 150.
[2] *Correspondence of Richardson*, vol. iv., p. 186.

literally depended on the decision to be pronounced by her admired author.

Against all these expostulations Richardson hardened himself. He knew that to bestow Clarissa upon the repentant Lovelace would have been to undermine the fabric he had built. This was the very purpose which the criminal had proposed to himself in the atrocious crime he had committed, and it was to dismiss him from the scene rewarded, not punished. The sublimity of the moral would have been altogether destroyed, since vice would have been no longer rendered hateful and miserable through its very success, nor virtue honoured and triumphant even by its degradation. The death of Clarissa alone could draw down on the guilty head of her betrayer the just and necessary retribution, and his guilt was of far too deep a dye to be otherwise expiated. Besides, the author felt, and forcibly pointed out, the degradation which the fervent creation of his fancy must have sustained, could she, with all her wrongs forgotten, and with the duty imposed on her by matrimony, to love, honour, and obey her betrayer, have sat down the commonplace good wife of her reformed rake. Indeed, those who peruse the work with attention will perceive that the author has been careful, in the earlier stages of his narrative, to bar out every prospect of such a union. Notwithstanding the levities and constitutional good-humour of Lovelace, his mind is too much perverted, his imagination too much inflamed, by his own insane Quixotism, and, above all, his heart is too much hardened, to render it possible for any one seriously to think of his conversion as sincere, or his union with Clarissa as happy. He had committed a crime for which he deserved death by the law of the country; and notwithstanding those good qualities with which the author has invested him, that he may not seem an actual incarnate fiend, there is no reader but feels vindictive pleasure when Morden passes the sword through his body.

On the other hand, Clarissa, reconciled to her violator, must have lost, in the eye of the reader, that dignity, with which the refusal of his hand, the only poor reparation he could offer, at present invests her; and it was right and fitting that a creature, every way so excellent, should, as is fabled of the ermine, pine to death on account of the stain with which she had been so injuriously sullied. We cannot, consistently with the high idea which we have previously entertained of her purity of character, imagine her surviving the contamination. On the whole, as Richardson himself pleaded, Clarissa has, as the narrative

presently stands, the greatest of triumphs even in this world—the greatest, even in and after the outrage, and because of the outrage, that any woman ever had.

It has often been observed that the extreme severity of the parents and relatives in this celebrated novel does not belong to our day, or perhaps even to Richardson's; and that Clarissa's dutiful scruples at assuming her own estate, or extricating herself by Miss Howe's means, are driven to extremity. Something, no doubt, is to be allowed for the licence of an author, who must necessarily, in order to command interest and attention, extend his incidents to the extreme verge of probability; but, besides, it is well known, that at least within the century, the notions of the *patria potestas* were of a much severer nature than those now entertained. Forced marriages in those days did sometimes actually take place, and that in houses of considerable rank; and the voice of public opinion had then comparatively little effect upon great and opulent families, inhabiting their country-seats, and living amid their own dependants, where strange violences were sometimes committed, under the specious pretext of enforcing domestic discipline. Each family was a little tribe within itself; and the near relations, like the elders among the Jews, had their Sanhedrim, where resolutions were adopted, as laws to control the free will of each individual member. It is upon this family compact that the Harlowes ground the rights which they assert with so much tyranny; and before the changes which have slackened the bonds of relationship, we believe that such incidents were not infrequent. But whether we consider Richardson as exhibiting a state of manners which may have lingered in the remote parts of England down to his own time, or suppose that he coloured them according to his own invention, and particularly according to his high notions of the "awful rule and right supremacy" lodged in the head of a family, there can be no doubt of the spirit with which the picture is executed; and particularly of the various gradations in which the Harlowe spirit exhibits itself, in the insolent and conceited brother, the mean and envious sister, the stern and unrelenting father, softened down in the elder brother James, and again roughened and exaggerated in the old seaman Anthony, each of whom, in various modifications, exhibits the same family features of avarice, pride, and ambition.

Miss Howe is an admirably sketched character, drawn in strong contrast to that of Clarissa, yet worthy of being her friend

—with more of worldly perspicacity, though less of abstracted principle; and who, when they argue upon points of doubt and delicacy, is often able, by going directly to the question at issue, to start the game, while her more gifted correspondent does but beat the bush. Her high spirit and disinterested devotion for her friend, acknowledging, as she does on all occasions, her own inferiority, show her in a noble point of view; and though we are afraid she must have given honest Hickman (notwithstanding her resolutions to the contrary) rather an uneasy time of it after marriage, yet it is impossible not to think that she was a prize worth suffering for.

The publication of *Clarissa* raised the fame of the author to the height. No work had appeared before, perhaps none has appeared since, containing so many direct appeals to the passions, stated too in a manner so irresistible. And high as his reputation stood in his own country, it was even more exalted in those of France and Germany, whose imaginations are more easily excited, and their passions more easily moved by tales of fictitious distress, than are the cold-blooded English. Foreigners of distinction have been known to visit Hampstead, and to inquire for the Flask Walk, distinguished as a scene in Clarissa's history, just as travellers visit the rocks of Meillerie to view the localities of Rousseau's tale of passion. Diderot vied with Rousseau in heaping incense upon the shrine of the English author. The former compares him to Homer, and predicts for his memory the same honours which are rendered to the Father of Epic poetry; and the last, besides his well-known burst of eloquent panegyric, records his opinion in a letter to D'Alembert: "On n'a jamais fait encore, en quelque langue que ce soit, de roman égal à Clarisse, ni même approchant." [1]

[1] ["The fervent opinion of Rousseau," says Mr. D'Israeli, "must be familiar to every reader; but Diderot, in his eloge on Richardson, exceeds even Rousseau in the enthusiasm of his feelings. I extract some of the most interesting passages. 'Of *Clarissa*,' he says, 'I yet remember with delight the first time it came into my hands. I was in the country. How deliciously I was affected! At every moment I saw my happiness abridged by a page. I then experienced the same sensations those feel who have long lived with one they love, and are on the point of separation. At the close of the work, I seemed to remain deserted.' The impassioned Diderot then breaks forth, 'O Richardson! thou singular genius in my eyes! thou shalt form my reading in all times. If forced by sharp necessity, my friend falls into indigence; if the mediocrity of my fortune is not sufficient to bestow on my children the necessary cares for their education, I will sell my books—but thou shalt remain! Yes, thou shalt rest in the *same class* with Moses, Homer, Euripides, and Sophocles, to be read alternately!' And again, 'Oh Richardson! I dare pronounce that the most veritable history is full of fictions, and thy romances are full of truths. History

There was never, perhaps, an author who was not encouraged by popular applause again to venture himself before the public; and Richardson, secure, moreover, in the prepossession of a large party of friends and admirers, was, of course, no exception to the general rule.

The subject of the third and last novel of this eminent author seems to have been in a great degree dictated by the criticism which *Clarissa* had undergone. To his own surprise, as he assured his correspondents, he found that the gaiety, spirit, and, occasionally, generosity of Lovelace, joined to his courage and ingenuity, had, in spite of his crimes, made him find too much grace in the eyes of his fair readers. He had been so studious to prevent this that, when he perceived his rake was rising into an undue and dangerous degree of favour with some of the young ladies of his own school, he threw in some darker shades of character. In this, according to the eulogy of Johnson, he was eminently successful; but still Lovelace appeared too captivating in the eyes of his fair friends, and even of Lady Bradshaigh; so that nothing remained for the author, in point of morality, but to prepare with all speed an antidote to the poison which he had incautiously administered.

With this view, the writer tasked his talents to embody the *beau idéal* of a virtuous character, who should have all the title to admiration which he could receive from wit, rank, figure, accomplishment, and fashion, yet compounded inseparably with the still higher qualifications which form the virtuous citizen and the faithful votary of religion. It was with this view that Richardson produced the work, originally denominated *The Good Man;* a title which, before publication, he judiciously exchanged for that of *Sir Charles Grandison.*

It must be acknowledged that, although the author exerted his utmost ability to succeed in the task which he had assumed, and, so far as detached parts of the work are considered, has given marks of the same genius which he employed in his former novels, yet this last production has neither the simplicity of the two first volumes of *Pamela,* nor the deep and overwhelming

paints some individuals, thou paintest the human species. History attributes to some individuals what they have neither said nor done; all that thou attributest to man he has said and done,' etc., etc. 'Painter of nature, thou never liest!'

"It is probable," adds Mr. D'Israeli, "that to a Frenchman the *style* of Richardson is not so objectionable when translated as to ourselves. The misfortune of Richardson was, that he was unskilful in the art of writing, and that he could never lay the pen down while his inkhorn supplied it."—*Curiosities of Literature,* First Series.]

interest of the inimitable *Clarissa*, and must, considering it as a whole, be ranked considerably beneath both these works.

The principal cause of failure may be perhaps traced to Richardson's too strong recollection of the aversion which his friendly critics and correspondents had displayed to the melancholy scenes in *Clarissa*, in which, darkening and deepening as the story proceeds, his heroine is involved, until the drama is closed by death. He was resolved (perhaps) to give his readers some indemnification, and having formerly shown them virtue in its state of earthly persecution and calamity, now resolved to introduce her, as John Bunyan says, in her golden slippers, and walking abroad in the sunshine. But the author did not sufficiently reflect that the beacon, upon an exposed headland, sending forth its saving light amid the rain and the storm, and burning where all around combines to its extinction, is a far grander and more interesting object to the imagination than the chandelier in a lordly hall, secured by walls and casements from the possibility even of a transient breeze agitating its brilliancy of lustre.

Sir Charles Grandison is a man of large fortune, of rank and of family, high in the opinion of all who know him, and discharging with the most punctilious accuracy his duties in every relation of life. But in order to his doing so, he is accommodated with all those exterior advantages which command awe and attract respect, although entirely adventitious to excellence of principle. He is munificent, but his fortune bears out his generosity; he is affectionate in his domestic relations, but the devoted attachment of his family leaves him no temptation to be otherwise; his temperament is averse from excess; his passions are under the command of his reason; his courage has been so often proved, that he can safely, and without reproach of the world, prefer the dictates of Christianity to the rules of modern honour; and in adventuring himself into danger, he has all the strength and address of Lovelace himself to trust to. Sir Charles encounters no misfortunes, and can hardly be said to undergo any trials. The author, in a word, has sent him forth

> ——— "victorious,
> Happy and glorious."

The only dilemma to which he is exposed in the course of the seven volumes, is the doubt which of two beautiful and accomplished women, excellent in disposition and high in rank, sister

excellences as it were, both being devotedly attached to him, he shall be pleased to select for his bride; and this with so small a shade of partiality towards either that we cannot conceive his happiness to be endangered wherever his lot may fall, except by a generous compassion for her whom he must necessarily relinquish. Whatever other difficulties surround him occasionally, vanish before his courage and address; and he is almost secure to make friends, and even converts, of those whose machinations may for a moment annoy him. In a word, Sir Charles Grandison "walks the course" without competition or rivalry.

All this does well enough in a funeral sermon or monumental inscription, where, by privilege of suppressing the worst qualities and exaggerating the better, such images of perfection are sometimes presented. But in the living world, a state of trial and a valley of tears, such unspotted worth, such unvarying perfection, is not to be met with; and, what is still more important, it could not, if we suppose it to have existence, be attended by all those favours of fortune which are accumulated upon Richardson's hero;—and hence the fatal objection, of Sir Charles Grandison being the

——"faultless monster that the world ne'er saw."

It is not the moral and religious excellence of Sir Charles which the reader is so much disposed to quarrel with, as that, while Richardson designs to give a high moral lesson by the success of his hero, he has failed through resting that success on circumstances which have nothing to do either with morality or religion, but might have been, if indeed they are not, depicted as the properties of Lovelace himself. It is impossible that any very deep lesson can be derived from contemplating a character, at once of unattainable excellence, and which is placed in circumstances of worldly ease and prosperity that render him entirely superior to temptation. Propose the example of Sir Charles Grandison to the sordid spirit, he will answer:—I will be generous when I have such an estate:—to the unkind brother or the cold friend—I will be affectionate (is the ready answer) when I meet such reciprocity of tenderness. Ask him who fears the reproach of the world, why he gives or accepts a challenge?—I would do neither, he replies, were my reputation for courage established like that of Sir Charles Grandison. The timid may excuse himself for not being bold in the defence of innocence, because he has neither Sir Charles's resolution, nor that inimitable command of his sword, which enables the hero to baffle,

and, in case of need, to disarm, all who may oppose his interference. Even the libertine will plead difference of temperament and habits, and contend, that Sir Charles had all his passions under such complete subjugation, that there was no more danger of his being hurried off by them, than that his six long-tailed horses should run away with his chariot. He does, unquestionably, now and then, in his communications to Dr. Bartlett and others, speak of his naturally passionate temperament as if it were still existing; but we see so little of its effects, or rather it appears, in spite of his own report, so utterly subdued and withered within him, that the only purpose of the confession seems to be, the adding this trait of modesty and humiliation to the more splendid virtues of the hero.

After all, there may, in this reasoning, be much of the perversity of human nature, which is always ready, like Job's tempter, to dispute that worth which has not been proved by adversity. But it was human nature which the author proposed to instruct; and, therefore, to human nature and its feelings, he should have adapted his example of piety and morality.

To take the matter less gravely, and consider *Sir Charles Grandison* as a work of amusement, it must be allowed, that the interest is destroyed in a great measure by the unceasing ascendency given to the fortune, as well as the character, of the hero. We feel he is too much under the special protection of the author to need any sympathy of ours, and that he has nothing to dread from all the Pollexfens, O'Haras, and so forth, in the world, so long as Richardson is decidedly his friend. Neither are our feelings much interested about him even while his fate is undetermined. He evinces too little passion, and certainly no preference, being clearly ready, with heart and good-will, to marry either Clementina or Harriet Byron, as circumstances may render most proper, and to " bow gracefully upon the hand " of the rejected lady, and bid her adieu.

Lady Bradshaigh, the frankest of Richardson's correspondents, states this objection to him in full force, and without ceremony: —" You have made me bounce off my chair with reading that two good girls were in love with your hero, and that he was fond of both. I have such despicable notions of a divided love, that I cannot have an idea how a worthy object can entertain such a thought." The truth is, that Richardson was always arguing for the superiority of duty and principle over feeling, and, not very wisely perhaps, in an abstract view at least, set himself willingly to the task of combating even the sentiment of honest

and virtuous love, considered as a passion, although implanted by nature in our breasts for the wisest, as well as kindest purposes, and leading, were it only by carrying our views and wishes beyond ourselves, to many more good consequences, under the modification of reason, than to evil, numerous as these may be, when it hurries us beyond reason's limits. So far did the author carry his contempt and defiance of Cupid, who had, down to his time, been the omnipotent diety of romance, as even to alarm Lady Bradshaigh by some hypothetical arguments in favour of polygamy, a system which goes to exclude individual preferences with a vengeance.

All this must be pardoned to the honest and kind-hearted Richardson, partly for argument's sake, partly because he had very high notions of the rights of the husband, as well as those of the master. It may be some comfort to the ladies to know, as appears from some passages in his Correspondence, that, like James the First of England, his despotism consisted more in theory than in practice; and that Mrs. Richardson appears to have had her full share of practical authority and control in whatever related to their quiet family.

Regarding Sir Charles, then, merely as the twenty-thousand prize, which was to be drawn by either of the ladies who might be so lucky as to win it, and whose own inclinations scarcely decided him more to the one than to the other, it is clear that the interest must rest—no very flattering thing for the fair sex—upon that predilection which the reader may entertain for the English or for the Italian lady. And with respect to Miss Byron, amiable as she is represented, and with qualities supposed to approach almost to those of Clarissa in her happiest state, there attaches a sort of indelicacy, of which we must suppose Clarissa, in similar circumstances, entirely incapable. She literally forms a league in Sir Charles's family, and among his friends, for the purpose of engaging his affections, and is contented to betray the secret of her own love, even when she believes it unreturned—a secret which every delicate mind holds so sacred—not only to the sister of Sir Charles and old Dr. Bartlett, but to all her own relations, and the Lord knows whom besides, who are all to be edified by the perusal of Sir Charles's letters. Most readers have felt that this conduct on Miss Byron's part, though designed only to elevate the hero, has the contrary effect of degrading the character of the heroine.

The real heroine of the work, and the only one in whose fortunes we take a deep and decided interest, is the unhappy

Clementina, whose madness, and indeed her whole conduct, is sketched with the same exquisite pencil which drew the distresses of Clarissa. There are in those passages relating to her, upon which we do not dwell, familiar as they must be to all our readers, scenes which equal anything that Richardson ever wrote, and which would alone be sufficient to rank him with the highest name in his line of composition. These, with other detached passages in the work, serve to show that it was no diminution in Richardson's powers, but solely the adoption of an inferior plan, which renders his two earlier works preferable to *Sir Charles Grandison*.

The structure of *Sir Charles Grandison* being wholly different from that of *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, enabled the author entirely to avoid, in his last work, some free and broad descriptions, which were unavoidable while detailing the enterprises of Mr. B—— or Lovelace. But though he was freed from all temptation to fall into indelicate warmth of description, a fault which the grosser age of our fathers endured better than ours, Richardson was still unfortunate in assuming the tone of elegance and of high fashion, to which, in his last work, he evidently aspired.

Mr. B—— is a country squire; the Harlowes, a purse-proud and vulgar race; Lovelace himself a *roué* in point of manners; Lord M—— has the manners and sentiments of an old rural gossip; and the vivacity of Miss Howe often approaches to vulgarity. Many models must have been under the observant eye of Richardson, extensive as his acquaintance was through all, excepting the highest circle of fashion, from which he might have drawn such characters, or at least have borrowed their manners and language.

But our author's aspiring to trace the manners of the great, as in *Sir Charles Grandison*, has called down the censure of an unquestionable judge, and who appears, in his case, disposed to be a severe critic. Lady Mary Wortley Montague, in her inimitable *Letters*, has the following passages: "His Anna Howe and Charlotte Grandison are recommended as patterns of charming pleasantry, and applauded by his saint-like dames, who mistake folly for wit and humour, and impudence and ill-nature for spirit and fire. Charlotte behaves like a humoursome child, and should have been used like one, and whipped in the presence of her friendly confederate, Harriet.—He (Richardson) has no idea of the manners of high life; his old Lord M—— talks in the style of a country justice, and his virtuous young ladies romp like the wenches round a May-pole.

Such liberties as pass between Mr. Lovelace and his cousins, are not to be excused by the relation. I should have been much astonished if Lord Denbigh should have offered to kiss me; and I dare swear, Lord Trentham never attempted such impertinence to you." [1]

It is no disrespect to Richardson to say, that he could not have had many opportunities of seeing the manners of high life; for society is formed upon principles different entirely from a selection of the best and wisest men; and the author's condition, though far from being low, indigent, or disrespectable, placed him in a humbler and happier rank. But there is one sort of good-breeding which is natural and unchangeable, and another, which, consisting of an acquaintance with the evanescent manners and fashions of the day, is merely conventional, and is perpetually changing, like the modes of dress observed in the same circles. The principles of the first are imprinted in every bosom of sense and delicacy. But to be ignorant of the latter, only shows that an author is not very conversant with the society where those flitting rules are observed, or, what may be equally the case, is incapable of tracing their changeful and fading hues. To transgress the rules of natural good-breeding, or to represent characters by whom they should be practised as doing so, is a want of taste which must adhere as a blemish to the work so long as it is read. But crimes against conventional good-breeding run a prescriptive course, and cease to be observed when the rules transgressed have, according to the usual mutability of fashion, been superseded by others. Such errors are like Livy's patavinity, which became imperceptible to latter readers. It was natural that a person of Lady Mary Wortley Montague's taste and rank should be shocked at the want of decorum which she complains of, but at this distance of time we are not sufficiently acquainted with the fashions of George the Second's reign to share her displeasure. We know in general, that salutation continued for a long period to be permitted by fashion, as much as the more lately licensed freedoms of shaking hands and offering the arm; and with this general knowledge it is of little consequence to us, at what particular year of God men of quality were restrained from kissing their cousins, or whether Richardson has made an anachronism in that important matter. The merit of Lovelace, considered as a portrait, remains to us the same, notwithstanding that wig, which is now frozen to his head amid his

[1] *Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montague*, vol. iv., p. 182.

sentimental attendance in the ivy-coppice, and anon skimmed into the fire when he receives the fatal news of Clarissa's death. We think as little of dress or fashion as when we gaze on the portraits of Vandyke, without asking whether the ruff and the sleeve be or be not precisely of the cut of the period. Lovelace, whether exactly corresponding to the minute fashions of his own time or no, continues equally to be what he is described in the nervous language of Johnson, in his *Life of Rowe*. "The character of Lothario seems to have been expanded by Richardson into that of Lovelace; but he has excelled his original in the moral effect of the fiction. Lothario, with gaiety which cannot be hated, and bravery which cannot be despised, retains too much of the spectator's kindness. It was in the power of Richardson alone to teach us at once esteem and detestation; to make virtuous resentment overpower all the benevolence which wit, and elegance, and courage naturally excite; and to lose at last the hero in the villain." [1]

Still, however, it is impossible altogether to vindicate Richardson from Lady Mary's charge, or to pronounce him wholly guiltless of trespassing upon the essence of good-breeding, as well as upon its temporary rules and modifications. Lady G—— has as much horse-play in her raillery as Miss Howe, and her lord is a double of Mr. Hickman. Now there ought to have been a difference betwixt the vivacity of a country-bred young lady, trained up under a sufficiently vulgar mother, and that of Miss Grandison, who had always lived in the very first society; and this Lady Mary has a just right to complain of.

There is a fault also attaches to the manners of Sir Charles Grandison himself, though doubtless intended as a model of elegance and courtesy. The very care which the author has taken to deck his manners and conversation with every becoming grace of action and words, has introduced a heavy formality, and a sort of flourishing politeness, into his whole person and deportment. His manner, in short, seems too much studied, and his talk too stiffly complimentary, *too like a printed book*, to use a Scottish phrase, to permit us to associate the ideas of gentlemanlike ease and affability, either with the one or the other. We believe this objection has been very generally entertained by the fair sex, for whose protection the laws of politeness are introduced, and who must therefore be the best judges how far they are complied with.

[1] *Life of Richardson*, vol. i., p. 108. ["As to *Clarissa*, I leave to those who can read it to judge and dispute. I could not do the one, and am consequently not qualified for the other."—Byron, vol. ii., p. 309.]

Notwithstanding these imperfections, and the disadvantage which a new work always sustains at first comparison with its predecessors, Richardson's fame was not diminished by the publication of his *Sir Charles Grandison*, and his fortune would have been increased but for a mercantle fraud, of a nature peculiarly audacious. By some means which he could not detect, sheet after sheet of the work as it passed the press was stolen from the author's printing-house, and sent to Dublin, where, availing themselves of the relations between the two countries as they then stood, some unprincipled booksellers prepared an Irish edition of the book, which they were thus enabled to bring into the market as soon as the author, and, by underselling him, greatly limited his deserved profits. Richardson appears in vain to have sought redress for this injustice by means of his correspondents in Ireland.[1] The union with the sister kingdom has, among other beneficial effects, had that of rendering such frauds impossible in future; and in that respect has been of the greatest service to literature.

Such is the succinct history of Richardson's productions, and such was its conclusion. It is only necessary to mention, that, besides his three celebrated novels, he completed that collection of *Familiar Letters*, the commencement of which led the way to *Pamela*—" A work," says Mrs. Barbauld, " usually found in the servant's drawer, but which when so found, has not unfrequently detained the eye of the mistress, wondering all the while by what secret charm she was induced to turn over a book, apparently too low for her perusal, and that charm was—Richardson." This work, which we have never seen, is said, by the same authority, to illustrate the extreme accuracy with which Richardson had attended to all the duties of life.

Richardson also wrote, in order to assist Dr. Johnson, the ninety-seventh number of the *Rambler*, which the editor ushered in by the following deserved encomium:—" The reader is indebted for this day's entertainment to an author from whom the age has received greater favours, who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue." [2]

[1] [For a minute detail of proceedings in this matter, see Nichol's *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iv., p. 586-593.]

[2] [No. 97 bears the form of a letter, to the editor of the *Rambler*, entitled, " Advice to Unmarried Ladies." Mr. Croker says, " Lady Bradshaigh, one of Mr. Richardson's female sycophants, thus addresses him on the subject of this letter: ' A few days ago, I was pleased with hearing a very sensible lady greatly pleased with the *Rambler*, No. 97. She happened to be in town when it was published; and I asked if she knew who was the

In our detailed remarks on Richardson's several novels, we have, as usual, anticipated much which we otherwise had to say concerning his general merits as an author. It will be to his immortal praise, that he was perhaps the first in this line of fictitious narrative, who threw aside the trappings of romance, with all its extravagance, and appealed to the genuine passions of the human heart. The circumstances which led him to descend from the stilts of bombast into the walks of nature, are described in his own account of the origin of *Pamela*, and he quickly discovered that it was not in humble life only that those feelings exist which find sympathy in every reader's bosom; for, if the sympathy which the distresses and the magnanimity of Clarissa excite, be not universal, we cannot envy those who are proof against their charm.

Richardson was well qualified to be the discoverer of a new style of writing, for he was a cautious, deep, and minute examinator of the human heart, and, like Cooke or Parry, left neither head, bay, nor inlet behind him, until he had traced its soundings, and laid it down in his chart, with all its minute sinuosities, its depths, and its shallows. Hence the high, and, comparatively considered, perhaps the undue superiority assigned by Johnson to Richardson over Fielding, against whom the Doctor seems to have entertained some prejudice. In one passage he asserts that "there is more knowledge of the human heart in one letter of Richardson's than in all *Tom Jones*." [1] And in another, he thus explains the proposition: "There is all the difference in the world between characters of nature and characters of manners, and there is this difference between the characters of Fielding and those of Richardson. Characters of manners are very entertaining; but they are to be understood by a more superficial observer than characters of nature, where a man must dive into the recesses of the human heart." Again, in comparing these two distinguished authors, the critic uses this illustration,—"that there was as great a difference between them, as between a man who knew how a watch was made, and

author? She said, "it was supposed to be one who was concerned in the *Spectator*, it being much better written than any of the *Ramblers*." I wanted to say who was really the author, but durst not, without your permission.'—*Rich. Cor.*, vol. vi., p. 108.—It was probably on some such authority that Mr. Payne told Mr. Chalmers (*Brit. Ess.*, vol. xix., p. 14) that No. 97 was 'the only paper which had a prosperous sale, and was popular.' The flatteries which Richardson's coterie lavished on him and all his works were quite extravagant. The paper is rather a poor one."—Croker's *Boswell*.—Note, vol. i., p. 178.]

[1] [Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Croker's edition, 1831, vol. ii., p. 49.]

a man who could tell the hour by looking at the dial-plate." [1] Dissenting as we do from the conclusions to be deduced from Dr. Johnson's simile, we would rather so modify it as to describe both authors as excellent mechanics; the time-pieces of Richardson showing a great deal of the internal work by which the index is regulated; while those of Fielding merely point to the hour of the day, being all that most men desire to know. Or, to take a more manageable comparison, the analogy betwixt the writings of Fielding and Richardson resembles that which free, bold, and true sketches bear to paintings that have been very minutely laboured, and which, amid their excellence, still exhibit some of the heaviness that almost always attends the highest degree of finishing. This, indeed, is admitted by Johnson himself, in his reply to the observation of the Honourable Thomas Erskine, that Richardson was tedious. "Why, sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment, and consider the story only as giving occasion to the sentiment." Were we to translate the controversy into plain language, it might be summed up in pronouncing the works of Richardson the more instructive, and the more deeply affecting, those of Fielding the more amusing; and that a reader might select the one or the other for his studies, according to Tony Lumpkin's phrase, as he felt himself "in a concatenation accordingly;" with this difference, however, that he who would laugh with Fielding may open *Tom Jones* at a venture; but he who would weep with Richardson, must be content to read through many pages, until his mind is in the mood fittest to appreciate the pathetic scenes introduced by a succession of minute and highly laboured details. This no doubt frequently occasions a suspension of the narrative, in order to afford time for the minute delineation of character. "Richardson himself has explained his principle," as is well observed by Mr. D'Israeli.[2] "If," he

[1] [Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Croker's edition, 1831, vol. ii., p. 50.]

[2] ["The censure," says Mr. D'Israeli, "which the Shakspeare of novelists has incurred for the tedious procrastination and the minute details of his fable; his slow unfolding characters, and the slightest gestures of his personages, is extremely unjust; for is it not evident that we could not have his peculiar excellences without these attendant effects? When characters are very fully delineated, the narrative must be suspended. Whenever the narrative is rapid, which so much delights superficial readers, the characters cannot be very minutely featured; and the writer who aims to instruct (as Richardson avowedly did) by the glow and eloquence of his feelings, must often sacrifice to this his local description. Richardson himself has given us the principle that guided him in composing. He tells us, '*If I give speeches*' etc."—*Curiosities of Literature.*]

tells us, "I give speeches and conversations, I ought to give them justly, for the humours and persons of characters cannot be known, unless I repeat what they say, and their manner of saying it." This process of miniature painting has, however, its bounds; and many readers will be disposed to acquiesce in the remark of D'Alembert, "*La Nature est bonne à imiter, mais non pas jusqu'à l'ennui.*" [1]

It is impossible to tell whether Richardson's peculiar and circumstantial mode of narrative arose entirely out of the mode in which he evolves his story by the correspondence of the actors, or whether his early partiality for letter-writing was not rather founded upon his innate love of detail. But these talents and propensities must have borne upon and fortified each other. To the letter-writer every event is recent, and is described while immediately under the eye, without a corresponding degree of reference to its relative importance to what has past and what is to come. All is, so to speak, painted in the foreground, and nothing in the distance. A game at whist, if the subject of a letter, must be detailed as much at length as a debate in the House of Commons, upon a subject of great national interest; and hence, perhaps, that tendency to prolixity, of which the readers of Richardson frequently complain.

There is an additional advantage, tending to the same disagreeable impression, since it requires that incidents must be, in many instances, detailed again and again, by the various actors, to their different correspondents. If this affords the opportunity of placing the characters, each in their own peculiar light, and contrasting their thoughts, plans, and sentiments, that advantage is at least partly balanced, by arresting the progress of the story, which stands still while the characters show all their paces, like horses in the manege, without advancing a yard. But then it gives the reader, as Mrs. Barbauld well remarks, the assurance of being thoroughly acquainted with those in whose fate he is to be interested. In consequence of this, adds that accomplished lady, "our feelings are not transient, elicited here and there by a pathetic stroke, but we regard his characters as

[1] ["D'Alembert was a great mathematician. His literary taste was extremely cold; he was not worthy of reading Richardson. The volumes, if he ever read them, must have fallen from his hands. The delicate and subtle turnings, those folds of the human heart, which require so nice a touch, was a problem which the mathematician could never solve. There is no other demonstration in the human heart, but an appeal to its feelings; and what are the calculating feelings of an arithmetician of lines and curves? He therefore declared of Richardson, that '*La Nature est bonne*,' etc."—D'Israeli.—Ibid.]

real personages, whom we know and converse with, and whose fate remains to be decided in the course of events." [1] The minute style of Richardson is accordingly attended with this peculiar advantage, that as strong a light as can be necessary is thrown on every personage who advances on the scene, and that we have as distinct an idea of the individual and peculiar character of every female in Mrs. Sinclair's family whom it is necessary to name; of the greedy and hypocritical Joseph Leman; of the plausible Captain Singleton; and of Lovelace's other agents, as we have of Lovelace himself. The character of Colonel Morden, for example, although we see so little of him, is quite individual. He is high-spirited, bold, and skilful at his weapon; a man of the world and a man of honour; neither violent enough to precipitate his revenge, nor forbearing enough to avoid grasping it when the fitting opportunity offers. The awe with which he is regarded by the Harlowes even before his appearance, the respect which Clarissa entertains for him as a natural protector, prepares us for his approach as he enters on the scene, like the Avenger of Blood; too late, indeed, to save Clarissa, but a worthy vindicator of her wrongs, and a no less worthy conqueror of Lovelace. Whatever piety and forbearance there is in his cousin's last charge to such a man as Colonel Morden, we cannot for a moment be either surprised or sorry that it is disobeyed.

It must not be overlooked, that, by the circumstantial detail of minute, trivial, and even uninteresting circumstances, the author gives to his fiction an air of reality that can scarcely otherwise be obtained. In every real narrative, he who tells it dwells upon slight and inconsiderable circumstances, no otherwise interesting than because they are associated in his mind with the more important events which he desires to communicate. De Foe, who understood, and availed himself on all occasions of this mode of garnishing an imaginary history with all the minute accompaniments which distinguish a true one, was scarce a greater master of this peculiar art, than was our author Richardson.

Still, with all these advantages, which so peculiarly adapted the mode of carrying on the story by epistolary correspondence to Richardson's peculiar genius, it has its corresponding defects. In order that all may be written, which must be known for the purpose of the narrative, the characters must frequently write, when it would be more natural for them to be acting—must

[1] *Life of Richardson*, vol. i., p. 82.

frequently write what it is not natural to write at all—and must at all times write a great deal oftener, and a great deal more, than one would now think human life has time for. But these arguments did not probably weigh much with Richardson, an inveterate letter-writer from his youth upwards, and himself certainly as indefatigable (we had almost said formidable) a correspondent as any of the characters he has drawn.

Richardson was himself aware of the luxuriance of his imagination, and that he was sometimes apt to exceed the patience of the reader. He indulged his own vein, by writing without any fixed plan, and at great length, which he afterwards curtailed and compressed; so that, strange as it may seem, his compositions were reduced almost one-half in point of size before they were committed to the press. In his two first novels he showed much attention to the plot; and though diffuse and prolix in narration, can never be said to be rambling or desultory. No characters are introduced, but for the purpose of advancing the plot; and there are but few of those digressive dialogues and dissertations with which *Sir Charles Grandison* abounds. The story in *Pamela* and in *Clarissa* keeps the direct road, though it moves slowly. But in his last work the author is much more excursive. There is indeed little in the plot to require attention; the various events, which are successively narrated, being no otherwise connected together, than as they place the character of the hero in some new and peculiar point of view. The same may be said of the numerous and long conversations upon religious and moral topics, which compose so great a part of the work, that a venerable old lady, whom we well knew, when in advanced age she became subject to drowsy fits, chose to hear *Sir Charles Grandison* read to her as she sat in her elbow-chair, in preference to any other work, "because," said she, "should I drop asleep in course of the reading, I am sure when I awake, I shall have lost none of the story, but shall find the party, where I left them, *conversing in the cedar-parlour*." It is probable, after all, that the prolixity of Richardson, which, to our giddy-paced times, is the greatest fault of his writing, was not such an objection to his contemporaries. Those who with patience had studied rant and bombast in the folios of Scuderi, could not readily tire of nature, sense, and genius, in the octavos of Richardson. But a modern reader may be permitted to wish that *Clarissa* had been a good deal abridged at the beginning, and *Sir Charles Grandison* at the end; that the last two volumes of *Pamela* had been absolutely cancelled, and the second much com-

pressed. And, upon the whole, it might be desired that many of those trivial details of dresses and decorations, which relish, to say truth, of the mantua-makers' shops in which Richardson made his first efforts at composition, were altogether abolished, especially where they are put into the letters of sensible persons, or impertinently thrust upon us during the currency of a scene of passion. It requires the recollection of Richardson's highest powers to maintain our respect for him, where he makes Lovelace, amidst all his triumph at Clarissa's elopement, describe her dress to Belford, from top to toe, with all the professional accuracy of a man-milliner. But it is ungracious to dwell on defects, redeemed by so many excellences.

The style of Richardson was of that pliable and facile kind, which could, with slight variety, be adapted to what best befitted his various personages. When he wrote in his higher characters, it was copious, expressive, and appropriate, but, through the imperfection of his education, not always strictly elegant, nor even accurate. During his life, the common cant as usual was, that he received assistance, which, as a practical admission of personal incompetence to the task they have undertaken, we believe few men of reputed talent would stoop to accept of. It is now known that he wrote his whole works without any such aid, excepting the *Ode to Wisdom* by Mrs. Carter, and a number of Latin quotations, furnished by a learned friend to bedizen the epistle of Elias Brand.

The power of Richardson's painting in his deeper scenes of tragedy never has been, and probably never will be, excelled. Those of distressed innocence, as in the history of Clarissa and Clementina, rend the very heart; and few, jealous of manly equanimity, should read them for the first time in presence of society. In others, where the same heroines, and particularly Clarissa, display a noble elevation of soul, rising above earthly considerations and earthly oppression, the reader is perhaps as much elevated towards a pure sympathy with virtue and religion, as uninspired composition can raise him. His scenes of unmixed horror, as the deaths of Belton and of the infamous Sinclair, are as dreadful as the former are elevating; and they are directed to the same noble purpose, increasing our fear and hatred of vice, as the former are qualified to augment our love and veneration of virtue. In this respect Fielding might have paid to Richardson's genius the just tribute, which, after much depreciation of his talents in other respects, Dryden rendered to Otway, "Yet he succeeds in moving the passions, which I cannot do."

The lighter qualities of the novelist were less proper to this distinguished author than those which are allied to tragedy. Yet not even in these was Richardson deficient; and his sketches of this kind display the same accurate knowledge of humanity manifested in his higher efforts. His comedy is not overstrained; he never steps beyond the bounds of nature, and never sacrifices truth and probability to brilliancy of effect. Without what is properly termed wit, the author possessed liveliness and gaiety sufficient to colour those comic scenes; and though he is never, like his rival Fielding, irresistibly ludicrous, nor indeed ever essays to be so, there is a fund of quaint drollery pervades his lighter sketches, which renders them very agreeable to the reader.

Without a complete copy of the works of this distinguished and truly English classic, a collection would be deplorably deficient; yet the change of taste and of fashion, from the causes we have freely stated, has thrown a temporary shade over Richardson's popularity.[1] Or, perhaps, he may, in the present generation, be only paying, by comparative neglect, the price of the very high reputation which he enjoyed during his own age. For if immortality, or anything approaching to it, is granted to authors, and to their works, it seems only to be on the conditions assigned to that of Nourjahad, in the beautiful Eastern tale, that they shall be liable to occasional intervals of slumber and comparative oblivion. Yet under all these disadvantages, the genius of Richardson must be ever acknowledged to have done honour to the language in which he wrote, and his manly and virtuous application of his talents to have been of service to morality, and to human nature in general.

[1] ["The elegant and fascinating productions which honoured the name of novel, those which Richardson, Mackenzie, and Burney gave to the public; of which it was the object to exalt virtue and degrade vice; to which no fault could be objected, unless that they unfitted here and there a romantic mind for the common intercourse of life, while they refined perhaps a thousand whose faculties could better bear the fair ideal which they presented—these have entirely vanished from the shelves of the circulating library. It may indeed be fairly alleged in defence of those who decline attempting this higher and more refined species of composition, that the soil was in some degree exhausted by over-cropping—that the multitude of base and tawdry imitations obscured the merit of the few which are tolerable, as the overwhelming blaze of blue, red, green, and yellow, at the exhibition, vitiates our taste for the few good paintings which show their modest hues upon its walls. The public was indeed weary of the protracted embarrassments of lords and ladies who spoke such language as was never spoken, and still more so of the see-saw correspondence between the sentimental Lady Lucretia and the witty Miss Caroline, who battledored it in the pathetic and the lively, like Morton and Reynolds on the stage."—*Quarterly Review*, May, 1810, p. 340.]

HENRY FIELDING

Of all the works of imagination, to which English genius has given origin, the writings of Henry Fielding are, perhaps, most decidedly and exclusively her own. They are not only altogether beyond the reach of translation, in the proper sense and spirit of the word, but we even question whether they can be fully understood, or relished to the highest extent, by such natives of Scotland and Ireland as are not habitually and intimately acquainted with the characters and manners of Old England. Parson Adams, Towwouse, Partridge, above all, Squire Western, are personages as peculiar to England as they are unknown to other countries. Nay, the actors, whose characters are of a more general cast, as Allworthy, Mrs. Miller, Tom Jones himself, and almost all the subordinate agents in the narrative, have the same cast of nationality, which adds not a little to the verisimilitude of the tale. The persons of the story live in England, travel in England, quarrel and fight in England; and scarce an incident occurs, without its being marked by something which could not well have happened in any other country. This nationality may be ascribed to the author's own habits of life, which rendered him conversant, at different periods, with all the various classes of English society, specimens of which he has selected with inimitable spirit of choice and description, for the amusement of his readers. Like many other men of talent, Fielding was unfortunate—his life was a life of imprudence and uncertainty; but it was while passing from the high society to which he was born, to that of the lowest and most miscellaneous kind to which his fortune condemned him, that he acquired the extended familiarity with the English character, in every rank and aspect, which has made his name immortal as a painter of national manners.

Henry Fielding, born 22nd April, 1707, was of noble descent, the third son of General Edmund Fielding, himself the third son of the Hon. John Fielding, who was the fifth son of William, Earl of Denbigh, who died in 1655. Our author was nearly connected with the ducal family of Kingston, which boasted a brighter ornament than rank or titles could bestow, in the wit

and beauty of the celebrated Lady Mary Wortley Montague. The mother of Henry Fielding was a daughter of Judge Gold, the first wife of his father the General. Henry was the only son of this marriage; but he had four sisters of the full blood, of whom Sarah, the third, was distinguished as an authoress by the history of *David Simple*, and other literary attempts. General Fielding married a second time, after the death of his first lady, and had a numerous family, one of whom is well remembered as a judge of police, by the title of Sir John Fielding. It is most probable that the expense attending so large a family, together with a natural thoughtlessness of disposition on the part of his father, occasioned Henry's being early thrown into those precarious circumstances, with which, excepting at brief intervals, he continued to struggle through life.

After receiving the rudiments of education from the Rev. Mr. Oliver, who is supposed to have furnished him with the outline of Parson Trulliber's character, Fielding was removed to Eton, where he became imbued deeply with that love of classic literature, which may be traced through all his works. As his father destined him to the bar, he was sent from Eton to study at Leyden, where he is said to have given earnest attention to the civil law. Had he remained in this regular course of study, the courts would probably have gained a lawyer, and the world would have lost a man of genius; but the circumstances of General Fielding determined the chance in favour of posterity, though perhaps against his son. Remittances failed, and the young student was compelled to return, at the age of twenty, to plunge into the dissipation of London, without a monitor to warn, or a friend to support him. General Fielding, indeed, promised his son an allowance of two hundred pounds a-year; but this, as his son used to say, "any one might pay who would." It is only necessary to add, that Fielding was tall, handsome, and well proportioned, had an expressive countenance, and possessed, with an uncommonly strong constitution, a keen relish of pleasure, with the power of enjoying the present moment, and trusting to chance for the future—and the reader has before him sufficient grounds to estimate the extent of his improvidence and distress. Lady Mary Wortley Montague, his kinswoman, and early acquaintance, has traced his temperament, and its consequences, in a few lines; and no one who can use her words, would willingly employ his own.

"I am sorry for Henry Fielding's death," says her ladyship, in one of her letters, upon receiving information of that event, "not only as I shall read no more of his writings, but because I believe he lost more than others, as no man enjoyed life more than he did; though few had less occasion to do so, the highest of his preferment being raking in the lowest sinks of vice and misery. I should think it a nobler and less nauseous employment, to be one of the staff-officers that conduct the nocturnal weddings. His happy constitution (even when he had, with great pains, half demolished it) made him forget every evil, when he was before a venison-pasty, or over a flask of champaigne; and I am persuaded he has known more happy moments than any prince upon earth. His natural spirits gave him rapture with his cook-maid, and cheerfulness when he was starving in a garret. There was a great similitude between his character and that of Sir Richard Steele. He had the advantage, both in learning, and, in my opinion, genius; they both agreed in wanting money, in spite of all their friends, and would have wanted it, if their hereditary lands had been as extensive as their imagination; yet each of them was so formed for happiness, it is pity he was not immortal."

Some resources were necessary for a man of pleasure, and Fielding found them in his pen, having, as he used to say himself, no alternative, but to be a hackney writer, or a hackney coachman. He at first employed himself in writing for the theatre, then in high reputation, having recently engaged the talents of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanburgh, and Farquhar. Fielding's comedies and farces were brought on the stage in hasty succession; and play after play, to the number of eighteen, sunk or swam on the theatrical sea, betwixt the years 1727 and 1736. None of these are now known or read, excepting the mock-tragedy of *Tom Thumb*, the translated play of *The Miser*, and the farces of *The Mock-Doctor* and *Intriguing Chamber-Maid;* and yet they are the productions of an author unrivalled for his conception and illustration of character in the kindred walk of imaginary narrative.

Fielding, the first of British novelists, for such he may surely be termed, has thus added his name to that of Le Sage and others, who, eminent for fictitious narration, have either altogether failed in their dramatic attempts, or at least have fallen far short of that degree of excellence which might have been previously augured of them. It is hard to fix upon any plausible reason for a failure, which has occurred in too many instances to be the operation of mere chance, especially since *à priori* one would think the same talents necessary for both walks of literature. Force of character, strength of expression, felicity of contrast and situation, a well-constructed plot, in

which the development is at once natural and unexpected, and where the interest is kept uniformly alive, till summed up by the catastrophe—all these are requisites as essential to the labour of the novelist, as to that of the dramatist, and, indeed, appear to comprehend the sum of the qualities necessary to success in both departments. Fielding's biographers have, in this particular instance, explained his lack of theatrical success, as arising entirely from the careless haste with which he huddled up his dramatic compositions; it being no uncommon thing with him to finish an act or two in a morning, and to write out whole scenes upon the paper in which his favourite tobacco had been wrapped up. Negligence of this kind will no doubt give rise to great inequalities in the productions of an author, so careless of his reputation; but will scarcely account for an attribute something like dulness, which pervades Fielding's plays, and which is rarely found in those works which a man of genius throws off "at a heat," to use Dryden's expression, in prodigal self-reliance on his internal resources. Neither are we at all disposed to believe, that an author so careless as Fielding, took much more pains in labouring his novels, than in composing his plays; and we are, therefore, compelled to seek some other and more general reason for the inferiority of the latter. This may perhaps be found in the nature of those two studies, which, intimately connected as they seem to be, are yet naturally distinct in some very essential particulars; so much so as to vindicate the general opinion, that he who applies himself with eminent success to the one, becomes, in some degree, unqualified for the other; like the artisan, who, by a particular turn for excellence in one mechanical department, loses the habit of dexterity necessary for acquitting himself with equal reputation in another; or as the artist, who has dedicated himself to the use of water-colours, is usually less distinguished by his skill in oil-painting.

It is the object of the novel-writer, to place before the reader as full and accurate a representation of the events which he relates, as can be done by the mere force of an excited imagination, without the assistance of material objects. His sole appeal is made to the world of fancy and of ideas, and in this consists his strength and his weakness, his poverty and his wealth. He cannot, like the painter, present a visible and tangible representation of his towns and his woods, his palaces and his castles; but, by awakening the imagination of a congenial reader, he places before his mind's eye, landscapes fairer than

those of Claude, and wilder than those of Salvator. He cannot, like the dramatist, present before our living eyes the heroes of former days, or the beautiful creations of his own fancy, embodied in the grace and majesty of Kemble or of Siddons; but he can teach his reader to conjure up forms even more dignified and beautiful than theirs. The same difference follows him through every branch of his art. The author of a novel, in short, has neither stage nor scene-painter, nor company of comedians, nor dresser, nor wardrobe; words, applied with the best of his skill, must supply all that these bring to the assistance of the dramatist. Action, and tone, and gesture, the smile of the lover, the frown of the tyrant, the grimace of the buffoon—all must be told, for nothing can be shown. Thus, the very dialogue becomes mixed with the narration; for he must not only tell what the characters actually said, in which his task is the same as that of the dramatic author, but must also describe the tone, the look, the gesture, with which their speech was accompanied—telling, in short, all which, in the drama, it becomes the province of the actor to express. It must, therefore, frequently happen, that the author best qualified for a province, in which all depends on the communication of his own ideas and feelings to the reader, without any intervening medium, may fall short of the skill necessary to adapt his compositions to the medium of the stage, where the very qualities most excellent in a novelist are out of place, and an impediment to success. Description and narration, which form the essence of the novel, must be very sparingly introduced into dramatic composition, and scarce ever have a good effect upon the stage. Even Puff, in *The Critic*, has the good sense to leave out "all about gilding the eastern hemisphere;" and the very first thing which the players struck out of his memorable tragedy was, the description of Queen Elizabeth, her palfrey, and her side-saddle. The drama speaks to the eye and ear; and when it ceases to address these bodily organs, and would exact from a theatrical audience that exercise of the imagination which is necessary to follow forth and embody circumstances neither spoken nor exhibited, there is an immediate failure, though it may be the failure of a man of genius. Hence it follows, that though a good acting play may be made by selecting a plot and characters from a novel, yet scarce any effort of genius could render a play into a narrative romance. In the former case, the author has only to contract the events within the space necessary for representation, to choose the most

striking characters, and exhibit them in the most forcible contrast, discard from the dialogue whatever is redundant or tedious, and so dramatise the whole. But we know not any effort of genius, which could successfully insert into a good play, those accessories of description and delineation, which are necessary to dilate it into a readable novel. It may thus easily be conceived, that he whose chief talent lies in addressing the imagination only, and whose style, therefore, must be expanded and circumstantial, may fail in a kind of composition where so much must be left to the efforts of the actor, with his allies and assistants the scene-painter and property-man, and where every attempt to interfere with their province, is an error unfavourable to the success of the piece. Besides, it must be farther remembered, that in fictitious narrative an author carries on his manufacture alone, and upon his own account; whereas, in dramatic writing, he enters into partnership with the performers, and it is by their joint efforts that the piece is to succeed. Copartnery is called, by Civilians, the mother of discord; and how likely it is to prove so in the present instance, may be illustrated by reference to the admirable dialogue between the player and the poet in *Joseph Andrews*, book iii., chap. 10. The poet must either be contented to fail, or to make great condescensions to the experience, and pay much attention to the peculiar qualifications, of those by whom his piece is to be represented. And he who in a novel had only to fit sentiments, action, and character, to the ideal beings, is now compelled to assume the much more difficult task of adapting all these to real existing persons, who, unless their parts are exactly suited to their own taste, and their peculiar capacities, have, each in his line, the means, and not unfrequently the inclination, to ruin the success of the play. Such are, amongst many others, the peculiar difficulties of the dramatic art, and they seem impediments which lie peculiarly in the way of the novelist who aspires to extend his sway over the stage.[1]

[1] ["This account of the matter, interesting and in many parts ingenious as it is, appears to us to be on the whole rather unsatisfactory. In the first place, Sir Walter accounts for the dramatic failures of his novelists, by suggesting that they had lost, in the habitual exercise of their talents for narrative, the 'particular turn' requisite for the attainment of excellence in the drama. But, unfortunately for this theory, the fact is, that Cervantes, Le Sage, Fielding, Smollett, began, one and all of them, with the drama, and, *after* failing in that, betook themselves to the efforts by which they have earned their immortality. No one instance is presented to us of a practised and successful dramatist trying his hand unsuccessfully at the novel; and yet it seems to be throughout assumed, that the frequent

Another circumstance may in the present day greatly interfere with the success of dramatic authors, and arises from the decay of that familiar acquaintance with the stage and its affairs, which prevailed during the more splendid days of the British theatre. It requires a frequent and close attendance upon the stage to learn the peculiar points which interest an audience, and the art of forming the *situations*, as they are technically called, which arrest attention and bring down applause. This is a qualification for dramatic excellence, which fashionable hours and modern manners render difficult to any one who is not

occurrence of such examples constitutes the principal difficulty to be solved. Another assumption, equally bold, and, as it seems to us, equally unfounded, is, that though a good acting play may be made by selecting a plot and characters from a novel, yet scarcely any effort of genius could render a play into a narrative romance. Now, in the first place, the former attempt (in the sense in which Sir Walter speaks of the matter) never has been made but once, by an author from whose talents any degree of success might have been *à priori* expected. Werner is in every point of view an anomaly, and we cannot consent to draw from it any general conclusion whatever. Such borrowing both of plot and character as we can trace in regard to almost every one of Shakspeare's plays, is nothing to the present purpose; for there infinitely more both of quantity and quality was added than taken. But who can suppose, that a man of genius in his senses ever will condescend to busy himself with transferring another man's complete extended plot, and all its full-length characters, from one form of composition to another—either from drama to romance, or from romance to drama? Secondly, in point of fact, no good acting play has ever been produced in the way Sir Walter describes. We have no *good* acting play from *Don Quixote*, or *Gil Blas*, or *Tom Jones*, or *Roderick Random*, or *Waverley*. The popular novels of the day are often, indeed, *dramatised*, in a certain sense of the word, and the people flock to see them. But are any such performances entitled to be talked of as good acting plays? On the contrary, the best of them that we have seen (for example *Rob Roy*) must be admitted to amount to an arbitrary sequence of individual scenes, which would be unintelligible to any audience that wanted the means of filling up, every here and there, the most lamentable and hopeless *hiatus*, from previous and perfect knowledge of the not merely plundered, but maimed, mutilated, mangled romance; and accordingly, whenever the romance passes from its first stage of extreme *popular* favour, the good acting play is sure to follow it. Fielding and Smollett had their day of being, as the author of *Waverley* somewhere styles the process, *Terryfied*. Miss Burney shared for her hour the same distinction; and so but yesterday, as it seems to us, did a greater than she, already almost equally forgotten by the mob of gallery *readers*—Miss Edgeworth. Before Sir Walter is entitled to argue as he has done, he must, at the least, show us, on the one hand, an author of *Macbeth* trying in vain to write an historical romance, or a full-grown Moliere failing in a novel; and, on the other, an author of *Waverley* making a deliberate but fruitless inroad on the province of the drama. Had *Don Quixote* been an early production of Cervantes; had Le Sage written the *Point d'Honneur*, or even *Turcaret*, after his *Diable Boiteux;* had Fielding written weak plays after *Tom Jones;* or Smollett dull ones after *Humphry Clinker*—the best, perhaps, in every respect, of his works, at all events by much the most dramatic—there might have been something in such cases; but even they would, for reasons too obvious to need stating, have been insufficient."—*Quarterly Review*, Sept. 1826.]

absolutely himself an actor. Nevertheless it is of such consequence that it will be found that the dullest and worst plays, written by authors who have themselves trod the stage, are, however intolerable in the closet, redeemed, in action, by some felicitous position or encounter of persons, which makes them pass muster on the boards. But this observation, though arising naturally out of the subject, cannot be said to apply to Fielding, much of whose life had probably been passed behind the scenes, and who had, indeed, as we shall see, been at one time a sort of manager himself.

We have noticed that until the year 1737, or thereabouts, Fielding lived the life of a man of wit and pleasure about town, seeking and finding amusement in scenes of gaiety and dissipation, and discharging the expense incidental to such a life, by the precarious resources afforded by the stage. He even became, for a season, the manager of a company, having assembled together, in 1735, a number of discarded comedians, who, he proposed, should execute his own dramas at the little theatre in the Haymarket, under the title of the Great Mogul's Company of Comedians. The project did not succeed; and the company, which, as he expressed it, had seemed to drop from the clouds, were under the necessity of disbanding.

During his theatrical career, Fielding, like most authors of the time, found it impossible to interest the public sufficiently in the various attempts which he made to gain popular favour without condescending to flatter their political animosities. Two of his dramatic pieces, *Pasquin*, and *The Historical Register*, display great acrimony against Sir Robert Walpole, from whom, in the year 1730, he had in vain sought for patronage.[1] The freedom of his satire is said to have operated considerably in producing a measure which was thought neces-

[1] [We preserve the verses addressed to Walpole on this occasion, as a specimen of Fielding's poetry.

While at the helm of state you ride,
Our nation's envy and its pride;
While foreign courts with wonder gaze,
And curse those councils which they praise;
Would you not wonder, sir, to view
Your bard, a greater man than you?
Which that he is, you cannot doubt,
When you have read the sequel out.

You know, great sir, that ancient fellows,
Philosophers, and such folks, tell us,
No great analogy between
Greatness and happiness is seen.

sary to arrest the licence of the stage, and put an end to that proneness to personal and political satire which had been fostered by the success of Gay's *Beggars' Opera*. This measure was the discretional power vested in the Lord Chamberlain, of refusing a licence to any piece of which he should disapprove. The regulation was the cause of much clamour at the time; but licentious satire has since found so many convenient modes of access to the public, that its exclusion from the stage is no longer a matter of interest or regret; nor is it now deemed a violent aggression on liberty, that contending political parties cannot be brought into collision within the walls of the theatres, intended, as they are, for places of public amusement, not for scenes of party struggle.

About 1736, Fielding seems to have formed the resolution of settling in life. He espoused a young lady of Salisbury, named Craddock, beautiful, amiable, and possessed of £1500. About the same time, by the death, it has been supposed, of his mother, he succeeded to a small estate of about £200 per annum, situated at Stower, in Derbyshire, affording him, in those days, the means of decent competence. To this place he retired from London, but unfortunately carried with him the same improvident disposition to enjoy the present at expense of the future, which seems

If then, as it might follow straight,
Wretched to be, is to be *great;*
Forbid it, gods, that you should try
What 'tis to be so great as I!

The family that dines the latest,
Is in our street esteem'd the greatest;
But latest hours must surely fall
For him who never dines at all.

Your taste in architect, you know,
Hath been admired by friend and foe;
But can your earthly domes compare
With all my castles—in the air?

We're often taught it does behove us
To think those greater, who're above us;
Another instance of my glory,
Who live above you, twice two story;
And from my garret can look down
On the whole street of Arlington.

Greatness by poets still is painted
With many followers acquainted:
This, too, doth in my favour speak;
Your levee is but twice a-week,
From mine I can exclude but one day,
My door is quiet on a Sunday.

to have marked his whole life. He established an equipage, with showy liveries; and his biographers lay some stress on the circumstance, that the colour, being a bright yellow, required to be frequently renewed—an important particular, which, in humble imitation of our accurate predecessors, we deem it unpardonable to suppress. Horses, hounds, and the exercise of an unbounded hospitality, soon aided the yellow livery-men in devouring the substance of their improvident master; and three years found Fielding without land, home, or revenue, a student in the Temple, where he applied himself closely to the law, and after the usual term was called to the bar. It is probable, he brought nothing from Derbyshire save that experience of a rural life, and its pleasures, which afterwards enabled him to delineate the inimitable Squire Western.

Fielding had now a profession, and, as he strongly applied his powerful mind to the principles of the law, it might have been expected that success would have followed in proportion. But those professional persons who can advance or retard the practice of a young lawyer, mistrusted, probably, the application of a wit and a man of pleasure, to the business they might otherwise have confided to him; and it is said that Fielding's own conduct was such as to justify their want of confidence. Disease, the consequence of a free life, came to the aid of dissipation of mind, and

Nor in the manner of attendance,
Doth your great bard claim less ascendance.
Familiar you to admiration
May be approached by all the nation;
While I, like the Mogul in *Indo*,
Am never seen but at my window.
If with my greatness you're offended,
The fault is easily amended;
For I'll come down, with wondrous ease,
Into whatever *place* you please.
I'm not ambitious, little matters
Will serve us great, but humble creatures.

Suppose a secretary o' this isle,
Just to be doing with a while;
Admiral, general, judge, or bishop,
Or I can foreign treaties dish up.
If the good genius of the nation
Should call me to negotiation,
Tuscan and French are in my head,
Latin I write, and *Greek*—I read.

If you should ask, what pleases best?
To get the most, and do the least;
What fitted for? You know, I'm sure,
I'm fittest for—a *sinecure*.]

interrupted the course of Fielding's practice by severe fits of the gout, which gradually impaired his robust constitution.[1] We find him, therefore, having again recourse to the stage, where he attempted to produce a continuation of his own piece of *The Virgin Unmasqued;* but, as one of the characters was supposed to be written in ridicule of a man of quality, the Chamberlain refused his licence. Pamphlets of political controversy, fugitive tracts, and essays, were the next means he had recourse to for subsistence; and as his ready pen produced them upon every emergency, he contrived, by the profits, to support himself and his family, to which he was fondly attached.

Amid this anxious career of precarious expedient and constant labour, he had the misfortune to lose his wife; and his grief at this domestic calamity was so extreme, that his friends became alarmed for the consequences to his reason. The violence of the emotion, however, was transient, though his regret was lasting; and the necessity of subsistence compelled him again to resume his literary labours. At length, in the year 1741 or 1742, circumstances induced him to engage in a mode of composition, which he retrieved from the disgrace in which he found it, and rendered a classical department of British literature.

The novel of *Pamela*, published in 1740, had carried the fame of Richardson to the highest pitch; and Fielding—whether he was tired of hearing it over-praised (for a book, several passages of which would now be thought highly indelicate, was in those days even recommended from the pulpit),[2] or whether, as a writer for daily subsistence, he caught at whatever interested the public for the time; or, whether, in fine, he was seduced by that wicked spirit of wit which cannot forbear turning into ridicule the idol of the day—resolved to caricature the style, principles, and personages of this favourite performance. As Gay's desire to satirise Philips gave rise to *The Shepherd's Week*, so Fielding's purpose to ridicule *Pamela* produced the *History*

[1] ["As long as his health permitted him," says Nichols, "he attended with punctual assiduity, both in term-time and on the Western Circuit; and it is probable that he would have arisen to considerable eminence in the law, had not the progress of his success been stopped by repeated attacks of the gout. These came so frequently upon him, that it was impossible for him to be as constant at the bar as the laboriousness of his profession required. Under this disadvantage, he still pursued his researches with an eagerness of curiosity peculiar to him; and attained such a knowledge of jurisprudence in general, and of crown-law in particular, as to leave two volumes in folio upon the latter subject."—*Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iii., p. 367.]

[2] [See Note, Life of Richardson, *ante*, p. 20.]

of Joseph Andrews; and in both cases, but especially in the latter, a work was executed infinitely better than could have been expected to arise out of such a motive, and the reader received a degree of pleasure very different, as well as far superior, to what the author himself appears to have proposed. There is, indeed, a fine vein of irony in Fielding's novel, as will appear from comparing it with the pages of *Pamela:* but *Pamela*, to which that irony was applied, is now in a manner forgotten, and *Joseph Andrews* continues to be read, for the admirable pictures of manners which it presents, and, above all, for the inimitable character of Mr. Abraham Adams,[1] which alone is sufficient to stamp the superiority of Fielding over all writers of his class. The worthy parson's learning, his simplicity, his evangelical purity of heart, and benevolence of disposition, are so admirably mingled with pedantry, absence of mind, and with the habit of athletic and gymnastic exercise, then acquired at the universities by students of all descriptions, that he may be safely termed one of the richest productions of the Muse of Fiction. Like Don Quixote, Parson Adams is beaten a little too much, and too often; but the cudgel lights upon his shoulders, as on those of the honoured Knight of La Mancha, without the slightest stain to his reputation; and he is bastinadoed without being degraded. The style of this piece is said, in the preface, to have been an imitation of Cervantes; but both in *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*, the author appears also to have had in view the *Roman Comique* of the once celebrated Scarron. From this author he has copied the mock heroic style, which tells ludicrous events in the language of the classical Epic; a vein of pleasantry which is soon wrought out, and which Fielding has employed so often as to expose him to the charge of pedantry.

Joseph Andrews was eminently successful; and the aggrieved Richardson, who was fond of praise even to adulation, was proportionally offended, while his group of admirers, male and female, took care to echo back his sentiments, and to heap Fielding with reproach. Their animosity survived his life, and we

[1] ["The Rev. William Young, a learned and much-esteemed friend of Mr. Fielding's, sat for this picture. Mr. Young was remarkable for his intimate acquaintance with the Greek writers, and was as passionate an admirer of Æschylus as Parson Adams is represented to have been. The overflowings of his benevolence were likewise as strong, and his fits of reverie as frequent. Indeed, they occurred to him on the most interesting occasions." So says Mr. Nichols—see his *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iii., p. 371. Mr. Young superintended and improved the edition of Ainsworth's *Latin Dictionary*, 2 vols. folio, 1752; and he was also employed in correcting an edition of Hederic's *Greek Lexicon*.]

find the most ungenerous reproaches thrown upon his memory, in the course of Richardson's correspondence. Richardson was well acquainted with Fielding's sisters, and complained to them —not of Fielding's usage of himself, that he was too wise, or too proud to mention—but of his unfortunate predilection to what was mean and low in character and description. The following expressions are remarkable, as well for the extreme modesty of the writer who thus rears himself into the paramount judge of Fielding's qualities, as for the delicacy which could intrude such observations on the ear of his rival's sister: "Poor Fielding! I could not help telling his sister, that I was equally surprised at, and concerned for, his continued lowness. Had your brother, said I, been born in a stable, or been a runner at a spunging-house, one should have thought him a genius, and wished he had had the advantage of a liberal education, and of being admitted into good company!" After this, we are not surprised at its being alleged that Fielding was destitute of invention and talents; that the run of his best works was nearly over; and that he would soon be forgotten as an author! Fielding does not appear to have retorted any of this ill-will; so that, if he gave the first offence, and that an unprovoked one, he was also the first to retreat from the contest, and to allow to Richardson those claims which his genius really demanded from the liberality of his contemporaries. In the fifth number of the *Jacobite Journal*,[1] Fielding highly commends *Clarissa*, which is by far the best and most powerful of Richardson's novels, and, with those scenes in *Sir Charles Grandison* which refer to the history of Clementina, contains the passages of deep pathos on which his claim to immortality must finally rest. Perhaps this is one of the cases in which one would rather have sympathised with the thoughtless offender, than with the less liberal and almost ungenerous mind which so long retained its resentment.[1]

After the publication of *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding had again recourse to the stage, and brought out *The Wedding Day*, which though on the whole unsuccessful, produced him some small profit. This was the last of his theatrical efforts which appeared during his life. The manuscript comedy of *The Fathers* was lost by Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, and, when recovered, was acted after the author's death for the benefit of his family.[2] An anecdote respecting the carelessness with which Fielding

[1] [See Life of Richardson, *ante*, pp. 11, 22.]

[2] [See Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iii., p. 363, for curious particulars concerning this comedy's fate.]

regarded his theatrical fame, is thus given by former biographers:

"On one of the days of its rehearsal, (*i.e.* the rehearsal of *The Wedding Day*,) Garrick, who performed a principal part, and who was even then a favourite with the public, told Fielding, he was apprehensive that the audience would make free with him in a particular passage, and remarked that, as a repulse might disconcert him during the remainder of the night, the passage should be omitted—'No, d—n 'em,' replied he, 'if the scene is not a good one, let them find *that* out.' Accordingly, the play was brought out without alteration, and, as had been foreseen, marks of disapprobation appeared. Garrick, alarmed at the hisses he had met with, retired into the green-room, where the author was solacing himself with a bottle of champagne. He had by this time drank pretty freely; and, glancing his eye at the actor, while clouds of tobacco issued from his mouth, cried out—'What's the matter, Garrick? what are they hissing now?'—'Why, the scene that I begged you to retrench,' replied the actor; 'I knew it would not do; and they have so frightened me, that I shall not be able to collect myself again the whole night.'—'Oh! d—n 'em,' rejoined he, with great coolness, 'they *have* found it out, have they?'"

Besides various fugitive pieces, Fielding published in, or about, 1743, a volume of Miscellanies, including *The Journey from this World to the Next*, a tract containing a good deal of Fielding's peculiar humour, but of which it is difficult to conceive the plan or purport. *The History of Jonathan Wild the Great* next followed. It is not easy to see what Fielding proposed to himself by a picture of complete vice, unrelieved by anything of human feeling, and never by any accident even deviating into virtue; and the ascribing a train of fictitious adventures to a real character, has in it something clumsy and inartificial on the one hand, and, on the other, subjects the author to a suspicion that he only used the title of Jonathan Wild, in order to connect his book with the popular renown of that infamous depredator. But there are few passages in Fielding's more celebrated works, more marked with his peculiar genius, than the scene betwixt his hero and the Ordinary, when in Newgate.

Besides these more permanent proofs of his industrious application to literature, the pen of Fielding was busily employed in the political and literary controversies of the times. He conducted one paper, called *The Jacobite Journal*, the object of which was to eradicate these feelings and sentiments which had been already so effectually crushed upon the Field of Culloden. *The True Patriot*, and *The Champion*,[1] were works

[1] ["A great portion of *The Champion* is employed on the follies, vices, amusements, and literature of the age; and the remainder is occupied by

of the same kind, which he entirely composed, or in which, at least, he had a principal share. In these various papers he steadily advocated what was then called the Whig cause, being attached to the principles of the Revolution, and the royal family of Brunswick, or, in other words, a person well affected to church and state.[1] His zeal was long unnoticed, while far inferior writers were enriched out of the secret-service money with unexampled prodigality. At length, in 1749, he received a small pension, together with the then disreputable office of a Justice of Peace for Westminster and Middlesex, of which he was at liberty to make the best he could by the worst means he might choose. This office, such as it was, he owed to the interference of Mr., afterwards Lord Lyttleton.

At this period, the magistrates of Westminster, thence termed Trading Justices, were repaid by fees for their services to the public; a mean and wretched system, which made it the interest of these functionaries to inflame every petty dispute which was brought before them, to trade, as it were, in guilt and in misery, and to wring their precarious subsistence out of thieves and pickpockets. The habits of Fielding, never choice or select in his society, were not improved by that to which his place exposed him. Horace Walpole gives us, in his usual unfeeling, but lively manner, the following description of a visit made to Fielding in his capacity of a Justice, by which we see his mind had stooped itself completely to his situation.

"Rigby gave me as strong a picture of nature. He and Peter Bathurst, t'other night, carried a servant of the latter's, who had attempted to shoot him, before Fielding, who, to all his other

political wit and discussion. To every paper is annexed what is termed 'an index to the times,' consisting of news, miscellaneous and political, frequently charged with the most sarcastic irony. In the critical department are to be found many ingenious dissertations on literary subjects."—*Quarterly Review*, May, 1809.]

[1] ["*The True Patriot*," says Mr. Nichols, "was not without its effect in exciting the sentiments of loyalty, and a love for the constitution in the breasts of his (Fielding's) countrymen. Mr. Addison, in his *Freeholder*, had set a fine example in this species of composition, and in Mr. Fielding he had not an unworthy follower. In *The True Patriot* was displayed a solid knowledge of the British laws and government, together with occasional sallies of humour, which would have made no inconsiderable figure in the political works of the greatest wits among our author's predecessors. Another periodical paper written by him was *The Jacobites' Journal*. It appeared in the beginning of 1748, and was calculated to discredit the shattered remains of an unsuccessful party; and, by a well-applied raillery and ridicule, to bring the sentiments of the disaffected into contempt, with a view of effacing them not only from the conversation, but from the minds of men."—*Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iii., p. 373.]

avocations, has, by the grace of Mr. Lyttleton, added that of Middlesex Justice. He sent them word he was at supper,—they must come next morning. They did not understand that freedom, and ran up, where they found him banqueting with a blind man, [Fielding's brother, probably,] a whore, and three Irishmen, on some cold mutton, and a bone of ham, both in one dish, and the dirtiest cloth. He never stirred, or asked them to sit. Rigby, who had seen him come so often to beg a guinea of Sir C. Williams, and Bathurst, at whose father's he had lived for victuals, understood that dignity as little, and pulled themselves chairs, on which he civilised." [1]

This is a humiliating anecdote, even after we have made allowance for the aristocratic exaggeration of Walpole, who, in acknowledging Fielding's talents elsewhere, has not failed to stigmatise the lowness of his society and habits.[2] Yet it is consoling to observe, that Fielding's principles remained unshaken, though the circumstances attending his official situation tended to increase the careless disrespectability of his private habits. His own account of his conduct respecting the dues of the office on which he depended for subsistence, has never been denied or doubted. "I will confess," says he, "that my private affairs, at the beginning of the winter, had but a gloomy aspect; for I had not plundered the public, or the poor, of those sums which men, who are always ready to plunder both as much as they can, have been pleased to suspect me of taking; on the contrary, by composing, instead of inflaming, the quarrels of porters and beggars (which, I blush when I say, hath not been universally practised), and by refusing to take a shilling from a man who most undoubtedly would not have had another left, I had reduced an income of about £500 a-year, of the dirtiest money upon earth, to little more than £300; a considerable portion of which remained with my clerk."

Besides the disinterestedness of which he set an example unusual in those days, Fielding endeavoured, by various suggestions, to abridge the catalogue of crimes and depravity which his office placed so closely under his eye. His *Enquiry*

[1] Letter from the Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montague, Esq.—Lond. 1818, p. 58.

[2] In his poetical account of Twickenham, Fielding's residence in the neighbourhood is not forgotten,—

> "Where Fielding met his bunter muse,
> And as they quaff'd the fiery juice,
> Droll nature stamp'd each lucky hit,
> With unimaginable wit."
>
> *The Parish Register of Twickenham.*

into the Increase of Thieves and Robbers contains several hints which have been adopted by succeeding statesmen, and some which are still worthy of more attention than they have yet received. As a magistrate, indeed, he was desirous of retrieving the dignity and independence of his own office; and his zeal on that subject has led him a little farther than he will be followed by the friends of rational freedom. But we cannot omit mentioning, that he was the first to touch on the frequency of pardons, rendered necessary by the multiplication of capital punishments, and that he placed his finger on that swelling imposthume of the state, the poor's rates, which has wrought so much evil, and is likely to work so much more. He published also a *Charge to the Grand Jury of Middlesex*, some *Tracts concerning Law Trials* of importance, and left behind him a manuscript on Crown Law. On the subject of the poor, he afterwards published a scheme for restricting them to their parishes, and providing for them in work-houses, which, like many others which have since appeared, only showed that he was fully sensible of the evil, without being able to suggest an effectual or practical remedy. A subsequent writer on the same thorny subject, Sir Frederic Morton Eden, observes, that Fielding's treatise exhibits "both the knowledge of the magistrate, and the energy and expression of the novel writer."[1] It was, however, before publishing his scheme for the provision of the poor, that he made himself immortal by the production of *Tom Jones*.

The *History of a Foundling* was composed under all the disadvantages incident to an author alternately pressed by the disagreeable task of his magisterial duties, and by the necessity of hurrying out some ephemeral essay or pamphlet to meet the demands of the passing day. It is inscribed to the Hon. Mr. Lyttleton, afterwards Lord Lyttleton, with a dedication, in which he intimates that without his assistance, and that of the Duke of Bedford, the work had never been completed, as the author had been indebted to them for the means of subsistence while engaged in composing it. Ralph Allen, the friend of Pope, is also alluded to as one of his benefactors, but un-

[1] [See *The State of the Poor, or a History of the Labouring Classes in England*, from the Conquest to the present period, in which are particularly considered their Domestic Economy, with respect to Diet, Dress, Fuel, and Habitation, and the various plans which have been proposed and adopted for their relief, etc. By Sir Frederick Morton Eden, Bart. 3 vols. 4to. London, 1797.]

named, by his own desire; thus confirming the truth of Pope's beautiful couplet—

> "Let humble Allen, with an awkward shame,
> Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame."

It is said that this munificent and modest patron made Fielding a present of £200 at one time, and that even before he was personally acquainted with him.

Under such precarious circumstances the first English novel was given to the public, which had not yet seen any works of fiction founded upon the plan of painting from nature. Even Richardson's novels are but a step from the old romance, approaching, indeed, more nearly to the ordinary course of events, but still dealing in improbable incidents, and in characters swelled out beyond the ordinary limits of humanity. The *History of a Foundling* is truth and human nature itself, and there lies the inestimable advantage which it possesses over all previous fictions of this particular kind. It was received with unanimous acclamation by the public, and proved so productive to Millar the publisher, that he handsomely added £100 to £600, for which last sum he had purchased the work.

The general merits of this popular and delightful work have been so often dwelt upon, and its imperfections so frequently censured, that we can do little more than hastily run over ground which has been repeatedly occupied. The felicitous contrivance, and happy extrication of the story, where every incident tells upon and advances the catastrophe, while, at the same time, it illustrates the characters of those interested in its approach, cannot too often be mentioned with the highest approbation. The attention of the reader is never diverted or puzzled by unnecessary digressions, or recalled to the main story by abrupt and startling recurrences; he glides down the narrative like a boat on the surface of some broad navigable stream, which only winds enough to gratify the voyager with the varied beauty of its banks. One exception to this praise, otherwise so well merited, occurs in the story of the *Old Man of the Hill;* an episode, which, in compliance with a custom introduced by Cervantes, and followed by Le Sage, Fielding has thrust into the midst of his narrative, as he had formerly introduced the *History of Leonora*, equally unnecessarily and inartificially, into that of *Joseph Andrews*. It has also been wondered, why Fielding should have chosen to leave the stain of illegitimacy on the birth of his hero; and it has been surmised,

that he did so in allusion to his own first wife, who was also a natural child. A better reason may be discovered in the story itself; for had Miss Bridget been privately married to the father of Tom Jones, there could have been no adequate motive assigned for keeping his birth secret from a man so reasonable and compassionate as Allworthy.

But even the high praise due to the construction and arrangement of the story, is inferior to that claimed by the truth, force, and spirit of the characters, from Tom Jones himself, down to Black George the gamekeeper and his family. Amongst these, Squire Western stands alone;[1] imitated from no prototype, and in himself an inimitable picture of ignorance, prejudice, irascibility, and rusticity, united with natural shrewdness, constitutional good-humour, and an instinctive affection for his daughter —all which qualities, good and bad, are grounded upon that basis of thorough selfishness, natural to one bred up, from infancy, where no one dared to contradict his arguments, or to control his conduct. In one incident alone, Fielding has departed from this admirable sketch. As an English squire, Western ought not to have taken a beating so unresistingly from the friend of Lord Fellamar. We half suspect that the passage is an interpolation. It is inconsistent with the Squire's readiness to engage in rustic affrays. We grant a pistol or sword might have appalled him; but Squire Western should have yielded to no one in the use of the English horsewhip; and as, with all his brutalities, we have a sneaking interest in the honest jolly country-gentleman, we would willingly hope there is some mistake in this matter.

The character of Jones, otherwise a model of generosity, openness, and manly spirit, mingled with thoughtless dissipation, is, in like manner, unnecessarily degraded by the nature of his intercourse with Lady Bellaston; and this is one of the circumstances which incline us to believe that Fielding's ideas of what was gentleman-like and honourable had sustained some depreciation, in consequence of the unhappy circumstances of his life, and of the society to which they condemned him.

A more sweeping and general objection was made against the *History of a Foundling* by the admirers of Richardson, and has been often repeated since. It is alleged that the ultimate moral

[1] ["There now are no Squire Westerns as of old;
And our Sophias are not so emphatic,
But fair as then, or fairer to behold.
We have no accomplish'd blackguards like Tom Jones,
But gentlemen in stays, as stiff as stones."
Don Juan, canto xiii., st. 110.]

of *Tom Jones*, which conducts to happiness, and holds up to our sympathy and esteem a youth who gives way to licentious habits, is detrimental to society, and tends to encourage the youthful reader in the practice of those follies to which his natural passions, and the usual course of the world, but too much direct him.[1] French delicacy, which, on so many occasions, has strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel, saw this fatal tendency in the work, and by an *arrêt* prohibited the circulation of a bungled abridgment by De la Place, entitled a translation. To this charge Fielding himself might probably have replied, that the vices into which Jones suffers himself to fall, are made the direct cause of placing him in the distressful situation which he occupies during the greater part of the narrative; while his generosity, his charity, and his amiable qualities, become the means of saving him from the consequences of his folly. But we suspect with Dr. Johnson, that there is something of cant both in the objection and in the answer to it. "Men," says that moralist, "will not become highwaymen because Macheath is acquitted on the stage;" and we add, that they will not become swindlers and thieves, because they sympathise with the fortunes of the witty picaroon Gil Blas, or licentious debauchees, because they read *Tom Jones*. The professed moral of a piece is usually what the reader is least interested in; it is like the mendicant, who cripples after some splendid and gay procession, and in vain solicits the attention of those who have been gazing upon it. Excluding from consideration those infamous works, which address themselves directly to awakening the grosser passions of our nature, we are inclined to think, the worst evil to be apprehended from the perusal of novels is, that the habit is apt to generate an indisposition to real history, and useful literature; and that the best which can be hoped is, that they may sometimes instruct the youthful mind by real pictures of life, and sometimes awaken their better feelings and sympathies by strains of generous sentiment, and tales of fictitious woe. Beyond this point they are a mere elegance, a luxury contrived for the amusement of polished life, and the gratification of that half love of literature, which pervades all ranks in an advanced stage of society, and are read much more for amusement, than with the least hope of deriving instruction from them. The vices and

[1] ["The cultivated genius of Fielding entitles him to a high rank among the classics. His works exhibit a series of pictures drawn with all the descriptive fidelity of a Hogarth. They are highly entertaining, and will always be read with pleasure; but they likewise disclose scenes which may corrupt a mind unseasoned by experience."—Dr. V. Knox's *Essays*.]

follies of Tom Jones, are those which the world soon teaches to all who enter on the career of life, and to which society is unhappily but too indulgent, nor do we believe that, in any one instance, the perusal of Fielding's novel has added one libertine to the large list, who would not have been such, had it never crossed the press. And it is with concern we add our sincere belief, that the fine picture of frankness and generosity, exhibited in that fictitious character, has had as few imitators as the career of his follies. Let it not be supposed that we are indifferent to morality, because we treat with scorn that affectation which, while in common life, it connives at the open practice of libertinism, pretends to detest the memory of an author who painted life as it was, with all its shades, and more than all the lights which it occasionally exhibits, to relieve them.[1] For particular passages of the work, the author can only be defended under the custom of his age, which permitted, in certain cases,

[1] [" With all due deference, we must take the liberty to believe, that both Dr. Johnson and Sir Walter Scott had judged as to these matters more from the vigour of their own masculine minds than from actual observation of the world at large, as it was, and is. The *Beggars' Opera* did, we may admit, no harm in the boxes, but we suspect the galleries, if they could speak, might tell a very different tale. Schiller's *Robbers* did, all the world knows, seduce certain enthusiastic *Burschen* from the German universities to the highway; and the records of our police courts and of graver tribunals are ready to prove, that while *Tom and Jerry* were crowding the streets with brawlers, the *Memoirs of Messrs. Moffat and Haggart* were leading or hurrying their victims to the gallows. In truth, to deny the influence of artificial representations of human life upon the manners of those who contemplate them, appears to us to be not very different from denying absolutely the effect of example. There are men and women, and there are boys and girls too, who may keep bad company with impunity; but such happy strength of mind, and still happier purity of nature, are, to say the least of the matter, by no means universal possessions. Our author, moreover, seems to speak rather inconsistently. He admits that romances 'may instruct the youthful mind by real pictures of life, and awaken our better feelings and sympathies by strains of generous sentiment.' But if they may be thus powerful for good, we fear it follows, as an unavoidable consequence, that they may be equally powerful for evil. And again he tells us, that 'the vices and follies of Tom Jones, are those which the world soon teaches to all who enter on the career of life, and to which society is unhappily too indulgent.' But he has not told us that such novels as *Tom Jones* are read by many long before they enter *the career of life*, anticipating, and, with fatal skill, paving the way for its lessons of licentiousness; nor has he made any estimate of the extent to which the over-indulgence of society, in regard to certain classes of vice, may be the effect of an immoral literature, operating, through a long course of years, on the individual minds of which society is composed. And when he '*excludes from consideration* those infamous works which address themselves directly to awakening the grosser passions,' we suspect he excludes a class of books by no means so generally injurious, as those which insinuate cunning doses of such stimulants, amidst materials which the wisest must admire, and the gravest cannot condemn."—*Quarterly Review*, Sept. 1826.]

much stronger language than ours. He has himself said that there is nothing which can offend the chastest eye in the perusal; and he spoke probably according to the ideas of his time. But in modern estimation there are several passages at which delicacy may justly take offence; and we can only say that they may be termed rather jocularly coarse than seductive; and that they are atoned for by the admirable mixture of wit and argument, by which, in others, the cause of true religion and virtue is supported and advanced.

Fielding considered his works as an experiment in British literature; and, therefore, he chose to prefix a preliminary Chapter to each Book, explanatory of his own views, and of the rules attached to this mode of composition. Those critical introductions, which rather interrupt the course of the story, and the flow of the interest at the first perusal, are found, on a second or third, the most entertaining chapters of the whole work.

The publication of *Tom Jones* carried Fielding's fame to its height; but seems to have been attended with no consequences to his fortune, beyond the temporary relief which the copy-money afforded him. It was after this period that he published his proposal for making an effectual Provision for the Poor, formerly noticed, and a pamphlet relating to the mysterious case of the celebrated Elizabeth Canning, in which he adopted the cause of common sense against popular prejudice, and failed in consequence in the object of his publication.

Amelia was the author's last work of importance. It may be termed a continuation of *Tom Jones;* but we have not the same sympathy for the ungrateful and dissolute conduct of Booth, which we yield to the youthful follies of Jones. The character of Amelia is said to have been drawn for Fielding's second wife. If he put her patience, as has been alleged, to tests of the same kind, he has, in some degree, repaid her, by the picture he has drawn of her feminine delicacy and pure tenderness.[1] Fielding's novels show few instances of pathos; it was,

[1] [" H. Fielding has given a true picture of himself and his first wife, in the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Booth, some compliments to his own figure excepted; and I am persuaded, several of the incidents he mentions are real matters of fact. I wonder he does not perceive Tom Jones and Mr. Booth are sorry scoundrels. All this sort of books have the same fault, which I cannot easily pardon, being very mischievous. They place a merit in extravagant passions, and encourage young people to hope for impossible events, to draw them out of the misery they choose to plunge themselves into, expecting legacies from unknown relatives, and generous benefactors to distressed virtue, as much out of nature as fairy treasures."—Lady M. W. Montague—*Works*, vol. iv., p. 259-60.]

perhaps, inconsistent with the life which he was compelled to lead; for those who see most of human misery become necessarily, in some degree, hardened to its effects. But few scenes of fictitious distress are more affecting than that in which Amelia is described as having made her little preparations for the evening, and sitting in anxious expectation of the return of her unworthy husband, whose folly is, in the meantime, preparing for her new scenes of misery. But our sympathy for the wife is disturbed by our dislike of her unthankful helpmate, of whose conversion we have no hope, and with whose errors we have no sympathy. The tale is, therefore, on the whole, unpleasing, even though relieved by the humours of the doughty Colonel Bath, and the learned Dr. Harrison, characters drawn with such force and precision, as Fielding alone knew how to employ.

Millar published *Amelia* in 1751. He had paid a thousand pounds for the copyright; and when he began to suspect that the work would be judged inferior to its predecessor, he employed the following stratagem to push it upon the trade. At a sale made to the booksellers, previous to the publication, Millar offered his friends his other publications on the usual terms of discount; but when he came to *Amelia*, he laid it aside, as a work expected to be in such demand that he could not afford to deliver it to the trade in the usual manner. The *ruse* succeeded—the impression was anxiously bought up, and the bookseller relieved from every apprehension of a slow sale.[1]

Notwithstanding former failures, Fielding, in 1752, commenced a new attempt at a literary newspaper and review, which he entitled the *Covent Garden Journal*, to be published twice a week, and conducted by Sir Alexander Drawcansir. It was the author's failing, that he could not continue any plan of this nature (for which otherwise his ready pen, sharp wit, and classical knowledge, so highly fitted him), without involving himself in some of the party squabbles, or petty literary broils, of the day. On the present occasion, it was not long ere he involved himself in a quarrel with Dr. Hill,[2] and other periodical writers. Among the latter, we are sorry to particularise

[1] ["Johnson," says Boswell, "read Fielding's *Amelia* through without stopping."—"He appears," says Malone, "to have been particularly pleased with the character of the heroine of this novel, and said, Fielding's Amelia was the most pleasing heroine of all the romances, but that vile broken nose never cured, ruined the sale of perhaps the only book, of which, being *published* betimes one morning, a new edition was called for before night."—*Anecdotes*, p. 221.]

[2] [See the particulars of this warfare in D'Israeli's *Quarrels of Authors*, vol. ii., p. 99.]

Smollett, although possessed of the most kindred genius to Fielding's which has yet appeared in British literature. The warfare was of brief duration, and neither party would obtain honour by an inquiry into the cause or conduct of its hostilities.

Meanwhile, Fielding's life was fast decaying; a complication of diseases had terminated in a dropsical habit, which totally undermined his strong constitution. The Duke of Newcastle, then prime minister, was desirous of receiving assistance from him in the formation of a plan, for the remedy and prevention of secret robberies, and improving the police of the metropolis. For the small consideration of £600, paid by government, Fielding engaged to extirpate several gangs of daring ruffians, which at this time infested London, and its vicinity; and though his health was reduced to the last extremity, he continued himself to superintend the conduct of his agents, to take evidence, and make commitments, until this great object was attained.

These last exertions seem to have been fatal to his exhausted frame, which suffered at once under dropsy, and jaundice, and asthma. The Bath waters were tried in vain, and various modes of cure or alleviation were resorted to, of which tapping only appears to have succeeded to a certain extent. The medical attendants gave their last sad advice in recommending a milder climate. Of his departure for Lisbon, in conformity with their opinion, he has himself left the following melancholy record, painting the man and his situation a thousand times better than any other pen could achieve.

"On this day, Wednesday, June 26, 1754," [1] he says, "the most melancholy sun I had ever beheld arose, and found me awake at my house at Fordhook. By the light of this sun, I was, in my own opinion, last to behold and take leave of some of those creatures on whom I doated with a mother-like fondness, guided by nature and passion, and uncured and unhardened by all the doctrine of that philosophical school, where I had learned to bear pains, and to despise death. In this situation, as I could not conquer nature, I submitted entirely to her, and she made as great a fool of me as she had ever done of any woman whatsoever; under pretence of giving me leave to enjoy, she drew me in to suffer, the company of my little ones, during eight hours; and I doubt not whether, in that time, I did not undergo more than in all my distemper. At twelve precisely my coach was at the door, which was no sooner told me, than I kissed my children round, and went into it with some little resolution. My wife, who behaved more like a heroine and philosopher, though at the same time the tenderest mother in the world,

[1] Voyage to Lisbon.

and my eldest daughter, followed me. Some friends went with us, and others here took their leave; and I heard my behaviour applauded, with many murmurs and praises, to which I well knew I had no title."

This affecting passage makes a part of his *Journey to Lisbon*, a work which he commenced during the voyage, with a hand trembling in almost its latest hour. It remains a singular example of Fielding's natural strength of mind, that while struggling hard at once with the depression and with the irritability of disease, he could still exhibit a few flashes of that bright wit, which once set the "world" in a roar. His perception of character, and power of describing it, had not forsaken him in those sad moments; for the master of the ship in which he sailed, the scolding landlady of the Isle of Wight, the military coxcomb who visits their vessel, are all portraits, marked with the master-hand which traced Parson Adams and Squire Western.

The *Journey to Lisbon* was abridged by fate. Fielding reached that city, indeed, alive, and remained there two months; but he was unable to continue his proposed literary labours. The hand of death was upon him, and seized upon its prey in the beginning of October, 1754. He died in the forty-eighth year of his life, leaving behind him a widow and four children, one of whom died soon afterwards. His brother, Sir John Fielding, well known as a magistrate, aided by the bounty of Mr. Allen, made suitable provision for the survivors; but of their fate we are ignorant.

Thus lived, and thus died, at a period of life when the world might have expected continued delight from his matured powers, the celebrated Henry Fielding, father of the English Novel; and in his powers of strong and national humour, and forcible yet natural exhibition of character, unapproached as yet, even by his most successful followers.[1]

ABBOTSFORD, *October* 25, 1820.

[1] ["Fielding, the *prose* Homer of human nature."—Byron, *Life*, vol. v., p. 55.]

TOBIAS SMOLLETT

THE *Life of Smollett,* whose genius has raised an imperishable monument to his fame, has been written, with spirit and elegance, by his friend and contemporary, the celebrated Dr. Moore, and more lately by Dr. Robert Anderson of Edinburgh, with a careful research, which leaves to us little except the task of selection and abridgment.

Our author was descended from an ancient and honourable family; an advantage to which, from various passages in his writings, he seems to have attached considerable weight, and the consciousness of which seems to have contributed its share in forming some of the peculiarities of his character.

Sir James Smollett of Bonhill, the grandfather of the celebrated author, was bred to the bar, became one of the Commissaries (*i.e.* Consistorial Judges) of Edinburgh, represented the burgh of Dumbarton in the Scottish Parliament, and lent his aid to dissolve that representative body for ever, being one of the Commissioners for framing the Union with England. By his lady, a daughter of Sir Aulay MacAulay of Ardincaple, Sir James Smollett had four sons, of whom Archibald, the youngest, was father of the poet.

It appears that Archibald Smollett followed no profession, and that, without his father's consent, he married an amiable woman, Barbara, daughter of Mr. Cunningham of Gilbertfield. The disunion betwixt the son and father, to which this act of imprudence gave rise, did not prevent Sir James Smollett from assigning to him, for his support, the house and farm of Dalquhurn, near his own mansion of Bonhill. Archibald Smollett died early, leaving two sons and a daughter wholly dependent on the kindness of his grandfather. The eldest son embraced the military life, and perished by the shipwreck of a transport. The daughter, Jane, married Mr. Telfer of Leadhills, and her descendant, Captain John Smollett, R.N., now represents the family, and possesses the estate of Bonhill. The second son of Archibald Smollett is the subject of this Memoir.

Tobias Smollett (baptised Tobias George) was born in 1721, in the old house of Dalquhurn, in the valley of Leven, in perhaps the most beautiful district in Britain. Its distinguished native has celebrated the vale of Leven, not only in the beautiful

ode addressed to his parent stream, but in the *Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, where he mentions the home of his forefathers in the following enthusiastic, yet not exaggerated terms:—

"A very little above the source of the Leven, on the lake, stands the house of Cameron, belonging to Mr. Smollett,[1] so embosomed in an oak wood, that we did not see it till we were within fifty yards of the door. The lake approaches on one side to within six or seven yards of the window. It might have been placed in a higher situation, which would have afforded a more extensive prospect, and a drier atmosphere; but this imperfection is not chargeable on the present proprietor, who purchased it ready built, rather than be at the trouble of repairing his own family-house of Bonhill, which stands two miles from hence on the Leven, so surrounded with plantations that it used to be known by the name of the Mavis (or thrush) Nest. Above that house is a romantic glen, or cleft of a mountain, covered with hanging woods, having at bottom a stream of fine water that forms a number of cascades in its descent to join the Leven, so that the scene is quite enchanting.

"I have seen the Lago di Gardi, Albano de Vico, Bolsena, and Geneva, and I prefer Loch-Lomond to them all; a preference which is certainly owing to the verdant islands that seem to float upon its surface, affording the most enchanting objects of repose to the excursive view. Nor are the banks destitute of beauties which even partake of the sublime. On this side they display a sweet variety of woodland, corn-fields, and pasture, with several agreeable villas, emerging, as it were, out of the lake; till at some distance, the prospect terminates in huge mountains, covered with heath, which, being in the bloom, affords a very rich covering of purple. Everything here is romantic beyond imagination. This country is justly styled the Arcadia of Scotland: I do not doubt but it may vie with Arcadia in everything but climate. I am sure it excels it in verdure, wood, and water."

A poet bred up amongst such scenes must become doubly attached to his art; and accordingly it appears that Smollett was in the highest degree sensible of the beauties of nature, although his fame has chiefly risen upon his power of delineating human character. He obtained the rudiments of classical knowledge at the Dumbarton grammar school, then taught by Mr. John Love, the scarce less learned antagonist of the learned Ruddiman. From thence he removed to Glasgow, where he pursued his studies with diligence and success, and was finally bound apprentice to Mr. John Gordon, an eminent surgeon. This destination was contrary to young Smollett's wishes, which strongly determined him to a military life; and he is supposed to have avenged himself both of his grandfather, who con-

[1] The late Commissary Smollett.

tradicted his inclinations, and of his master, by describing the former under the unamiable character of the old judge, and the latter as Mr. Potion, the first master of *Roderick Random*. At a later period he did Mr. Gordon justice by mentioning him in the following terms: "I was introduced to Mr. Gordon," says Matthew Bramble, "a patriot of a truly noble spirit, who is father of the linen manufactory in that place, and was the great promoter of the city workhouse, infirmary, and other works of public utility. Had he lived in ancient Rome, he would have been honoured with a statue at the public expense."

During his apprenticeship, Smollett's conduct indicated that love of frolic, practical jest, and playful mischief, of which his works show many proofs, and the young novelist gave also several indications of his talents and propensity to satire.[1] It is said that his master expressed his conviction of Smollett's future eminence in very homely but expressive terms, when some of his neighbours were boasting the superior decorum and propriety of their young pupils. "It may be all very true," said the keen-sighted Mr. Gordon; "but give me, before them all, my own bubbly-nosed callant, with the stane in his pouch." Without attempting to render this into English, our southern readers must be informed, that the words contain a faithful sketch of a negligent, unlucky, but spirited urchin, never without some mischievous prank in his head, and a stone in his pocket ready to execute it.[2]

In the eighteenth year of Smollett's life, his grandfather, Sir

[1] ["Although, at so early a period of life, he was liable to very great mistakes in judging of the characters of mankind, yet he began to direct the edge of his boyish satire against such scanty shoots of affectation and ridicule as were produced in a city enriched by commerce, and enlightened by its university. The shafts of his wit were not even then confined to the coquetry and foppery of the youthful and fashionable only, but were sometimes aimed at the selfishness and hypocrisy of the more formal and serious part of the citizens, among whom the chief means of acquiring importance were the possession of wealth, and the decent observance of the duties of religion.

"These early productions of his muse afforded much entertainment to his young companions, but they gave offence to many pious and industrious persons, who were unjustly accused of being hypocrites, and exposed to his satire. Some of them, it is said, possessed a considerable portion of that species of humour for which he was afterwards so much distinguished. None of them, however, have been thought worthy of preservation."—Anderson's *Life of Smollett*, p. 14.]

[2] ["On a winter evening," says Dr. Moore, "when the streets were covered with snow, Smollett happened to be engaged in a snow-ball fight with a few boys of his own age. Among his associates was the apprentice of that surgeon who is supposed to have been delineated under the name of Crab in *Roderick Random*. He entered his shop while his apprentice was in the heat of the engagement. On the return of the latter, the master

James, died, making no provision by his will for the children of his youngest son, a neglect which, joined to other circumstances already mentioned, procured him from his irritable descendant the painful distinction which the old judge holds in the narrative of *Roderick Random*.

Without efficient patronage of any kind, Smollett, in his nineteenth year, went to London to seek his fortune wherever he might find it. He carried with him the *Regicide*, a tragedy, written during the progress of his studies, but which, though it evinces in particular passages the genius of the author, cannot be termed with justice a performance suited for the stage. Lord Lyttleton, as a patron—Garrick and Lacy, as managers—gave the youthful author some encouragement, which, perhaps, the sanguine temper of Smollett overrated; for, in the story of Mr. Melopoyn, where he gives the history of his attempts to bring the *Regicide* on the stage, the patron and the manager are not spared; and, in *Peregrine Pickle*, the personage of Gosling Scrag, which occurs in the first edition only, is meant to represent Lord Lyttleton. The story is more briefly told in the preface to the first edition of the *Regicide*, where the author informs us that his tragedy

" was taken into the protection of one of those little fellows who are sometimes called great men, and, like other orphans, neglected accordingly. Stung with resentment," he adds, " which I mistook for contempt, I resolved to punish this barbarous indifference, and actually discarded my patron; consoling myself with the barren praises of a few associates, who, in the most indefatigable manner, employed their time and influence in collecting from all quarters observations on my piece, which, in consequence of those suggestions, put on a new appearance almost every day, until my occasions called me out of the kingdom."

Disappointed in the hopes he had founded on in his theatrical attempt, Smollett accepted the situation of surgeon's mate on board of a ship of the line in the expedition to Carthagena, in 1741, of which he published a short account in *Roderick Random*,

remonstrated severely with him for his negligence in quitting the shop. The youth excused himself by saying that while he was employed in making up a prescription, a fellow had hit him with a snowball; and he had been in pursuit of the delinquent. ' A mighty probable story truly,' said the master, in an ironical tone; ' I wonder how long I should stand here,' added he, ' before it would enter into any mortal's head to throw a snowball at me.' While he was holding his head erect, with a most scornful air, he received a very severe blow in the face by a snowball. Smollett, who stood concealed behind the pillar at the shop door, had heard the dialogue; and perceiving that his companion was puzzled for an answer, he extricated him by a repartee equally smart and *à propos*."—*Life of Smollett.*]

and a longer narrative in a *Compendium of Voyages*, published in 1751. But the term of our author's service in the navy was chiefly remarkable from his having acquired, in that brief space, such intimate knowledge of our nautical world, as enabled him to describe sailors with such truth and spirit of delineation, that from that time whoever has undertaken the same task has seemed to copy more from Smollett than from nature. Our author quitted the navy in disgust alike with the drudgery and with the despotic discipline, which in those days was qualified by no urbanity on the part of superior officers, and which exposed subordinates in the service to such mortifications as a haughty spirit like that of Smollett could very ill endure. He left the service in the West Indies, and after a residence of some time in the island of Jamaica, returned to England in 1746. Obscure traces of the vexatious persecutions which he underwent during his service in the navy may be found in *Roderick Random;* but the temper of the author was too irritable to encourage our full confidence in the truth of his satire.

It was at this time, when, incensed at the brutal severities exercised by the government's troops in the Highlands, to which romantic regions he was a neighbour by birth, Smollett wrote the pathetic, spirited, and patriotic verses entitled *The Tears of Caledonia*. The late Robert Graham, Esq. of Gartmore, a particular friend and trustee of Smollett, has recorded the manner in which this effusion was poured forth.

"Some gentlemen having met at a tavern were amusing themselves before supper with a game at cards; while Smollett, not choosing to play, sat down to write. One of the company, who also was nominated by him one of his trustees," (Gartmore himself,) "observing his earnestness, and supposing he was writing verses, asked him if it was not so. He accordingly read them the first sketch of his *Tears of Scotland*, consisting only of six stanzas; and on their remarking that the termination of the poem, being too strongly expressed, might give offence to persons whose political opinions were different, he sat down, without reply, and, with an air of great indignation, subjoined the concluding stanza:—

> "While the warm blood bedews my veins,
> And unimpair'd remembrance reigns,
> Resentment of my Country's fate
> Within my filial breast shall beat.
> Yes, spite of thine insulting foe,
> My sympathising verse shall flow.
> Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn,
> Thy banish'd peace, thy laurels torn!"

To estimate the generous emotions with which Smollett was

actuated on this occasion, it must be remarked that his patriotism was independent of party feeling, as he had been bred up in Whig principles, which were those of his family; and although these appear from his historical work to have been in some degree modified, yet the author continued attached to the principles of the Revolution. It is also to be remembered that, at the extinction of a civil war, the least appearance of sympathy with the vanquished party is sure to interrupt fairer prospects of preferment than any which opened to Smollett. His feelings for his country's distresses, and his resentment of the injuries she sustained, were as genuine and disinterested as the mode of expressing them is pathetic and spirited.

Smollett, on his return from the West Indies, settled in London, and commenced his career as a professional man. He was not successful as a physician, probably because his independent and haughty spirit neglected the by-paths which lead to fame in that profession. One account says that he failed to render himself agreeable to his female patients, certainly not from want of address or figure, for both were remarkably pleasing, but more probably by a hasty impatience of listening to petty complaints, and a want of sympathy with the lamentations of those who laboured under no real indisposition. It is remarkable that although very many, perhaps the greatest number of successful medical men, have assumed a despotic authority over their patients after their character was established, few or none have risen to pre-eminence in practice who used the same want of ceremony in the commencement of their career. Perhaps, however, Dr. Smollett was too soon discouraged, and abandoned prematurely a profession in which success is proverbially slow.

Smollett, who must have felt his own powers, had naturally recourse to his pen, to supply the deficiencies of an income which his practice did not afford; and besides repeated attempts to get his tragedy acted, he sent forth, in 1746, *Advice*, and in 1747, *Reproof*, both poetical satires possessed of considerable merit, but which only influenced the fate of the author, as they increased the number of his personal enemies. Rich, the manager, was particularly satirised in *Reproof*. Smollett had written for the Covent Garden theatre an opera called *Alceste*, which was not acted in consequence of some quarrel betwixt the author and manager, which Smollett thus avenged.

About 1747, Smollett was married to Miss Lascelles, a beautiful and accomplished woman, to whom he had become attached in the West Indies. Instead of an expected fortune of £3000, he

gained by this connection only a lawsuit, and increased the expense of housekeeping, which he was still less able to afford, and was again obliged to have recourse to his literary talents.

Necessity is the mother of invention in literature as well as in the arts, and the necessity of Smollett brought him forth in his pre-eminent character of a novelist. *Roderick Random* may be considered an as imitation of Le Sage, as the hero flits through almost every scene of public and private life, recording, as he paints his own adventures, the manners of the times, with all their various shades and diversities of colouring; but forming no connected plot or story, the several parts of which hold connection with, or bear proportion to, each other. It was the second example of the minor-romance, or English novel. Fielding had shortly before set the example in his *Tom Jones*, and a rival of almost equal eminence, in 1748, brought forth the *Adventures of Roderick Random;* a work which was eagerly received by the public, and brought both reputation and profit to the author.

It was generally believed that Smollett painted some of his own early adventures under the veil of fiction; but the public carried the spirit of applying the characters of a work of fiction to living personages much farther perhaps than the author intended. Gawkey, Crabbe, and Potion,[1] were assigned to individuals in the West of Scotland; Mrs. Smollett was supposed to be Narcissa; the author himself represented Roderick Random (of which there can be little doubt); a bookbinder and barber, the early acquaintances of Smollett, contended for the character of the attached, amiable, simple-hearted Strap;[2] and

[1] ["Gordon is generally said to have been the original of Potion in *Roderick Random*. This has been denied by Smollett's biographers; but their conjecture is of no more weight than the tradition which it contradicts. In the characters of a work so compounded of truth and fiction, the author alone could have estimated the personality which he intended, and of that intention he was not probably communicative. The tradition still remaining at Glasgow is, that Smollett was a restive apprentice, and a mischievous stripling. While at the university he cultivated the study of literature, as well as that of medicine, and showed a disposition for poetry, but very often in that bitter vein of satire which he carried so plentifully into the temper of his future years."—Campbell.]

[2] ["Mr. Lewis, of Chelsea, who died in 1783, used to bind books for, and enjoy the company and conversation of the first literary men of his day; and was generally supposed to have been the original of Strap, in *Roderick Random*. Mrs. Lewis often assured the writer of this article, that her husband denied the assertions of many people, as often as it was mentioned to him; but there is every reason to suppose him to have been the person that Smollett had in view, as they came out of Scotland together, and, when Smollett lived at Chelsea, Mr. Lewis used to dine every Sunday with him."—Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iii., p. 465.]

the two naval officers, under whom Smollett had served, were stigmatised under the names of Oakum and Whiffle. Certain it is, that the contempt with which his unfortunate play had been treated forms the basis of Mr. Melopoyn's story, in which Garrick and Lyttleton are roughly treated under the characters of Marmozet and Sheerwit. The public did not taste less keenly the real merits of this interesting and humorous work, because they conceived it to possess the zest arising from personal allusion; and the sale of the work exceeded greatly the expectations of all concerned.

Having now the ear of the public, Smollett published, by subscription, his unfortunate tragedy, the *Regicide*, in order to shame those who had barred his access to the stage. The preface is filled with complaints, which are neither just nor manly, and with strictures upon Garrick and Lyttleton, which amount almost to abuse. The merits of the piece by no means vindicate this extreme resentment on the part of the author, and of this Smollett himself became at length sensible. He was impetuous, but not sullen in his resentment, and generously allowed, in his *History of England*, the full merit to those, whom, in the first impulse of passion and disappointment, he had treated with injustice.[1]

[1] Desirous " of doing justice in a work of truth for wrongs done in a work of fiction " (to use his own expression), in giving a sketch of the liberal arts in his *History of England*, he remarked, " the exhibitions of the stage were improved to the most exquisite entertainment by the talents and management of Garrick, who greatly surpassed all his predecessors of this, and perhaps every other nation, in his genius for acting, in the sweetness and variety of his tones, the irresistible magic of his eye, the fire and vivacity of his action, the elegance of attitude, and the whole pathos of expression.

" Candidates for literary fame appeared even in the higher sphere of life, embellished by the nervous sense and extensive erudition of a Corke, by the delicate taste, the polished muse, and tender feelings of a Lyttleton."

Not satisfied with this *public* declaration of his sentiments, he wrote in still stronger terms to Mr. Garrick:

CHELSEA, *Jan.* 27, 1762.

" DEAR SIR,—I this morning received your *Winter's Tale*, and am agreeably flattered by this mark of your attention. What I have said of Mr. Garrick in the *History of England*, was, I protest, the language of my heart. I shall rejoice if he thinks I have done him barely justice. I am sure the public will think I have done him no more than justice. In giving a short sketch of the liberal arts, I could not, with any propriety, forbear mentioning a gentleman so eminently distinguished by a genius that has no rival. Besides, I thought it was a duty incumbent on me in particular, to make a public atonement in a work of truth for wrongs done him in a work of fiction.

" Among the other inconveniences arising from ill health, I deeply regret my being disabled from a personal cultivation of your good-will, and the unspeakable enjoyment I should sometimes derive from your private

In 1750, Smollett made a tour to Paris, where he gleaned materials for future works of fiction, besides enlarging his acquaintance with life and manners. A coxcomb painter, whom he met on this occasion, formed the original of the exquisite Pallet; while Dr. Akenside, a man of a very different character, was marked the future prey of satire as the pedantic Doctor of Medicine. He is said to have offended Smollett by some national reflections on Scotland,[1] while his extravagant zeal for liberty, which was in no great danger, and his pedantic and exclusive admiration of the manners of classical antiquity, afforded, as Smollett has drawn them, an ample fund of ridicule.

Peregrine Pickle is supposed to have been written chiefly in Paris, and appeared in 1751. It was received by the public with uncommon avidity, and a large impression dispersed, notwithstanding the efforts of certain booksellers and others, whom Smollett accuses of attempts to obstruct the sale, the book being published on account of the author himself. His irritable temper induced him to run hastily before the public with complaints, which, howsoever well or ill-grounded, the public has been at all times accustomed to hear with great indifference. Many professional authors, philosophers, and other public characters of the time, were also satirised with little restraint.

The splendid merits of the work itself were a much greater victory over the author's enemies, if he really had such, than any which he could gain by personal altercation with unworthy opponents. Yet by many his second novel was not thought quite equal to his first. In truth, there occurs betwixt *Roderick Random* and *Peregrine Pickle* a difference, which is often observed betwixt the first and second efforts of authors who have been successful in this line. *Peregrine Pickle* is more finished, more sedulously laboured into excellence, exhibits scenes of more accumulated interest, and presents a richer variety of character and adventure, than *Roderick Random ;* but yet there is an ease and simplicity in the first novel which is not quite attained in the second, where the author has substituted splendid colouring for strict fidelity of outline. Thus, of the inimitable sea-characters, Trunnion, Pipes, and even Hatchway, border upon caricature; but Lieutenant Bowling and Jack Rattlin are truth and

conversation, as well as from the public exertion of your talents; but sequestered as I am from the world of entertainment, the consciousness of standing well in your opinion will ever afford singular satisfaction to,—Dear Sir, Your very humble Servant, T. Smollett."

[1] [Akenside had studied his profession at Edinburgh.]

nature itself. The reason seems to be, that when an author brings forth his first representation of any class of characters, he seizes on the leading and striking outlines, and therefore, in the second attempt of the same kind, he is forced to make some distinction, and either to invest his personage with less obvious and ordinary traits of character, or to place him in a new and less natural light. Hence, it would seem, the difference in opinion which sometimes occurs betwixt the author and the reader, respecting the comparative value of early and of subsequent publications. The author naturally esteems that most upon which he is conscious much more labour has been bestowed, while the public often remain constant to their first love, and prefer the facility and truth of the earlier work to the more elaborate execution displayed in those which follow it. But though the simplicity of its predecessor was not, and could not be, repeated in Smollett's second novel, his powers are so far from evincing any falling off, that in *Peregrine Pickle* there is a much wider range of character and incident than is exhibited in *Roderick Random*, as well as a more rich and brilliant display of the talents and humour of the distinguished author.

Peregrine Pickle did not, however, owe its success entirely to its intrinsic merit. The *Memoirs of a Lady of Quality*, a separate tale, thrust into the work, with which it has no sort of connection, in the manner introduced by Cervantes, and followed by Le Sage and Fielding, added considerably to its immediate popularity. These Memoirs, which are now regarded as a tiresome and unnecessary excrescence upon the main story, contain the history of Lady Vane, renowned at that time for her beauty and her intrigues.[1] The lady not only furnished Smollett with the materials for recording her own infamy, but, it is said, rewarded him handsomely for the insertion of her story. Mr. MacKercher, a character of a different description, was also introduced. He was remarkable for the benevolent Quixotry with which he supported the pretensions of the unfortunate Mr. Annesley, a claimant of the title and property of Anglesea. The public took the interest in the frailties of Lady Vane, and the benevolence of Mr. MacKercher, which they always take in the history of living

[1] Lady Vane was the daughter of Francis Hawes, Esq., of Purley Hall, near Reading, in Berkshire, one of the South Sea Directors in 1720, and married, about the beginning of 1732, at the age of seventeen, to Lord William Hamilton, who dying July 11, 1734, she married, May 19, 1735, Lord Viscount Vane, of the kingdom of Ireland, with whom she had various scandalous lawsuits, and died in London, March 31, 1788, in the seventy-second year of her life.

and remarkable characters; and the anecdotes respecting the demirep and the man of charity, greatly promoted the instant popularity of *Peregrine Pickle*.

The extreme licence of some of the scenes described in this novel gave deep offence to the thinking part of the public; and the work, in conformity to their just complaints, was much altered in the second edition. The preliminary advertisement has these words:—

"It was the author's duty, as well as his interest, to oblige the public with this edition, which he has endeavoured to render less unworthy of their acceptance, by retrenching the superfluities of the first, reforming its manners, and correcting its expression. Divers uninteresting incidents are wholly suppressed; some humorous scenes he has endeavoured to heighten; and he flatters himself that he has expunged every adventure, phrase, and insinuation, that could be construed by the most delicate reader into a trespass upon the rules of decorum.

"He owns with contrition that, in one or two instances, he gave way too much to the suggestions of personal resentment, and represented characters, as they appeared to him at the time, through the exaggerated medium of prejudice. But he has in this impression endeavoured to make atonement for these extravagances. However he may have erred in point of judgment or discretion, he defies the whole world to prove that he was ever guilty of one act of malice, ingratitude, or dishonour. This declaration he may be permitted to make, without incurring the imputation of vanity or presumption, considering the numerous shafts of envy, rancour, and revenge, that have lately, both in public and private, been levelled at his reputation."

In reference to this palinode, we may barely observe, that the passages retrenched in the second edition are, generally speaking, details of frolics in which the author had permitted his turn for humour greatly to outrun his sense of decency and propriety; and, in this respect, notwithstanding what he himself says in the passage just quoted, the work would have been much improved by a more unsparing application of the pruning knife. Several personal reflections were also omitted, particularly those on Lyttleton and Fielding, whom he had upbraided for his dependence on that statesman's patronage.[1]

[1] Lyttleton's celebrated *Monody on the Death of his Wife*, was ridiculed by a burlesque *Ode on the Death of my Grandmother*, of which the following may be a sufficient specimen:

"Where was thou, wittol Ward, when hapless fate
From these weak arms mine aged granam tore;
These pious arms assay'd too late
To drive the dismal phantom from the door.

Dr. Anderson informs us that, " at this period, Smollett seems to have obtained the degree of Doctor of Physic, probably from a foreign University, and announced himself a candidate for fame and fortune as a physician, by a publication entitled, ' An Essay on the External Use of Water, in a Letter to Dr ——, with particular Remarks upon the present Method of using the Mineral Waters at Bath in Somersetshire, and a Plan for rendering them more safe, agreeable, and efficacious; 4to, 1752.' [1] The performance advanced his reputation as a man of science and taste, but failed to conduct the physician to professional eminence and wealth. This is the only publication in the line of his profession which is known to have proceeded from his pen." If the essay was intended to serve as an introduction to practice, it was totally unsuccessful. Perhaps Smollett's char-

> Could not thy healing drop, illustrious quack,
> Could not thy salutary pill prolong her days,
> For whom, so oft, to Marybone, alack!
> Thy sorrels dragg'd thee through the worst of ways? "
> Etc. etc.

Neither is Smollett more respectful to Lyttleton in his personal character than to his poetical talent. He describes him as " the famous Gosling Scrag, Esq., son and heir of Sir Marmaduke Scrag, who seats himself in the chair of judgment, and give sentence upon the authors of the age. I should be glad to know upon what pretensions to genius this predominance is founded? Do a few flimsy odes, barren epistles, pointless epigrams, and the superstitious suggestions of a half-witted enthusiast, entitle him to that eminent rank he maintains in the world of letters? or did he acquire the reputation of a wit, by a repetition of trite invectives against a minister, conveyed in a theatrical cadence, accompanied with the most ridiculous gestures, before he believed it was his interest to desert his master, and renounce his party? For my own part, I never perused any of his performances, I never saw him open his mouth in public, I never heard him speak in private conversation, without recollecting and applying these two lines in Pope's *Dunciad*—

> ' Dulness, delighted, eyed the lively dunce,
> Remembering she herself was pertness once.' "

Lord Lyttleton's patronage of Fielding is thus contemptuously noticed, in a recommendation to a young author to feed the vanity of Gosling Scrag, Esq.: " I advise Mr. Spondy to give him the refusal of this same pastoral; and who knows but he may have the good fortune of being listed in the number of his beef-eaters, in which case he may, in process of time, be provided for in the Customs or Church: and when he is inclined to marry his own cook-maid his gracious patron may condescend to give the bride away; and may finally settle him in his old age as a trading Westminster Justice."—*Peregrine Pickle*, Edit. 1751, vol. iv., p. 123.

[1] [The late ingenious artist, Mr. H. W. Williams of Edinburgh, tells us, in his Travels, that a friend of his had seen, in 1816, at Leghorn, the diploma of Smollett's doctorate, and that it was an Aberdeen one. The present Editor thought it worth while to enquire into this, and Professor Cruikshanks has politely forwarded a certificated copy of the diploma, which was granted by the Marischal College of Aberdeen in June, 1750.]

acter as a satirist, and the readiness he had shown to ingraft the peculiarities and history of individuals into works of fiction, were serious obstacles to him in a profession which demands so much confidence as that of a family physician. But it is probable that the author's chief object in the publication was to assist the cause of a particular friend, Mr. Cleland, a surgeon at Bath, then engaged in a controversy concerning the use of these celebrated waters.

In the year 1753, Dr. Smollett published *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom*, one of those works which seem to have been written for the purpose of showing how far humour and genius can go, in painting a complete picture of human depravity. Smollett has made his own defence for the loathsome task which he has undertaken.

> "Let me not," says he, in the dedication, "be condemned for having chosen my principal character from the purlieus of treachery and fraud, when I declare my purpose is to set him up as a beacon for the benefit of the inexperienced and unwary, who, from the perusal of these memoirs, may learn to avoid the manifold snares with which they are continually surrounded in the paths of life, while those who hesitate on the brink of iniquity may be terrified from plunging into that irremediable gulf, by surveying the deplorable fate of Ferdinand Count Fathom."

But, while we do justice to the author's motives, we are obliged to deny the validity of his reasoning. To a reader of a good disposition and well-regulated mind, the picture of moral depravity presented in the character of Count Fathom is a disgusting pollution of the imagination. To those, on the other hand, who hesitate on the brink of meditated iniquity, it is not safe to detail the arts by which the ingenuity of villany has triumphed in former instances; and it is well known that the publication of the real account of uncommon crimes, although attended by the public and infamous punishment of the perpetrators, has often had the effect of stimulating others to similar actions. To some unhappy minds, it may occur as a sort of extenuation of the crime which they meditate, that even if they carry their purpose into execution, their guilt will fall far short of what the author has ascribed to his fictitious character; and there are other imaginations so ill regulated, that they catch infection from stories of wickedness, and feel an insane impulse to emulate and to realise the pictures of villany, which are embodied in such narratives as those of *Zeluco* or *Count Fathom*.

Condemning, however, the plan and tendency of the work, it

is impossible to deny our applause to the wonderful knowledge of life and manners, which is evinced in the tale of *Count Fathom*, as much as in any of Smollett's works. The horrible adventure in the hut of the robbers, is a tale of natural terror which rises into the sublime; and, though often imitated, has never yet been surpassed, or perhaps equalled. In *Count Fathom* also is to be found the first candid attempt to do justice to a calumniated race. The benevolent Jew of Cumberland had his prototype in the worthy Israelite, whom Smollett has introduced with very great effect into the history of *Fathom*.

Shortly after this publication, Smollett's warmth of temper involved him in an unpleasant embarrassment. A person, called Peter Gordon, after having been saved by Smollett's humanity from imprisonment and ruin, and after having prevailed upon him to interpose his credit in his behalf to an inconvenient extent, withdrew within the verge of the court, set his creditors at defiance, and treated his benefactor with so much personal insolence, that Smollett chastised him by a beating. A prosecution was commenced by Gordon, and his counsel, Mr. Home Campbell, whether in indulgence of his natural rudeness and impetuosity, of which he had a great share, or whether moved by some special enmity against Smollett, opened the case with an unusual torrent of violence and misrepresentation. But the good sense and impartiality of the jury acquitted Smollett of the assault, and he was no sooner cleared of the charge than he sent an angry remonstrance to Mr. Home Campbell, demanding that he should retract what he had said to his disadvantage. It does not appear how the affair was settled, but Smollett's manifesto, as a literary curiosity, is inserted in the Appendix to this Memoir.[1] Besides that this expostulation is too long for the occasion, and far too violent to be dignified, Smollett imputes to Campbell the improbable charge, that he was desirous to revenge himself upon the author of *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, because he had satirised the profession of the law. Lawyers are seldom very sensitive on this head, and if they were, they would have constant exercise for their irritability; since scarce a satirical author, of whatsoever description, has concluded his work, without giving cause to the gentlemen of the robe for some such offence, as Smollett supposes Campbell to have taken in the present instance. The manifesto of Smollett contains, however, some just censure on the prevailing mode in which witnesses are treated in the courts

[1] [See Appendix, No. I.]

of justice in England, who, far from being considered as persons brought there to speak the truth in a matter wherein they have no concern, and who are therefore entitled to civil treatment, and to the protection of the court, on the contrary are often regarded as men standing forward to perjure themselves, and are therefore condemned beforehand to a species of moral pillory, where they are pelted with all the foul jests which the wit of their interrogators can suggest.

Smollett's next task was a new version of *Don Quixote*, to which he was encouraged by a liberal subscription. The work was inscribed to Don Ricardo Wall, Principal Secretary of State to his Most Catholic Majesty, by whom the undertaking had been encouraged. Smollett's version of this admirable classic is thus elegantly compared with those of Motteux (or Ozell) and of Jarvis, by the late ingenious and amiable Lord Woodhouselee, in his *Essay on the Principles of Translation.*

"Smollett inherited from nature a strong sense of ridicule, a great fund of original humour, and a happy versatility of talent, by which he could accommodate his style to almost every species of writing. He could adopt, alternately, the solemn, the lively, the sarcastic, the burlesque, and the vulgar. To these qualifications he joined an inventive genius and a vigorous imagination. As he possessed talents equal to the composition of original works of the same species with the romance of Cervantes, so it is not perhaps possible to conceive a writer more completely qualified to give a perfect translation of that novel.

"Motteux, with no great abilities as an original writer, appears to me to have been endowed with a strong perception of the ridiculous in human character, a just discernment of the weaknesses and follies of mankind. He seems likewise to have had a great command of the various styles which are accommodated to the expression both of grave burlesque, and of low humour. Inferior to Smollett in inventive genius, he seems to have equalled him in every quality which was essentially requisite to a translator of Don Quixote. It may, therefore, be supposed, that the contest between them will be nearly equal, and the question of preference very difficult to be decided. It would have been so, had Smollett confided in his own strength, and bestowed on his task that time and labour which the length and difficulty of the work required; but Smollett too often wrote in such circumstances, that despatch was his primary object. He found various English translations at hand, which he judged might save him the labour of a new composition. Jarvis could give him faithfully the sense of his author; and it was necessary only to polish his asperities, and lighten his heavy and awkward phraseology. To contend with Motteux, Smollett found it necessary to assume the armour of Jarvis. This author had purposely avoided, through the whole of his work, the smallest coincidence of expression with Motteux, whom, with equal

presumption and injustice, he accuses in his preface of having 'taken his version wholly from the French.' We find, therefore, both in the translation of Jarvis, and that of Smollett, which is little else than an improved edition of the former, that there is a studied rejection of the phraseology of Motteux. Now, Motteux, though he has frequently assumed too great a license, both in adding to, and retrenching from the ideas of his original, has, upon the whole, a very high degree of merit as a translator. In the adoption of corresponding idioms, he has been eminently fortunate; and, as in these there is no great latitude, he has, in general, preoccupied the appropriate phrases; so that a succeeding translator, who proceeded on the rule of invariably rejecting his phraseology, must have, in general, altered for the worse. Such, I have said, was the rule laid down by Jarvis, and by his copyist and improver, Smollett, who, by thus absurdly rejecting what his own judgment and taste must have approved, has produced a composition decidedly inferior, on the whole, to that of Motteux.

"Smollett was a good poet, and most of the verse translations, interspersed through this work, are executed with ability. It is on this head that Motteux has assumed to himself the greatest license. He has very presumptuously mutilated the poetry of Cervantes, by leaving out many entire stanzas from the larger compositions, and suppressing some of the smaller altogether. Yet the translation of those poems which he has retained is possessed of much poetical merit, and, in particular, those verses which are of a graver cast, are, in my opinion, superior to those of his rival.

"On the whole, I am inclined to think the version of Motteux is by far the best we have yet seen of the romance of Cervantes, and that, if corrected in its licentious observations and enlargements, and in some other particulars, which I have noticed in the course of this comparison, we should have nothing to desire superior to it in the way of translation."

After the publication of *Don Quixote*, Smollett paid a visit to his native country,[1] in order to see his mother, who then resided at Scotston, in Peeblesshire, with her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Telfer. Dr. Moore has given us the following beautiful anecdote respecting the meeting of the mother with her distinguished son.

"On Smollett's arrival, he was introduced to his mother, with the connivance of Mrs. Telfer, as a gentleman from the West Indies, who was intimately acquainted with her son. The better to support his assumed character, he endeavoured to preserve a serious countenance, approaching to a frown; but, while his mother's eyes were riveted on his countenance, he could not refrain from smiling:

[1] [Smollett, while in Edinburgh at this time, was introduced to all the leading literati of Scotland, through the friendship of the late Dr. Carlyle, minister of Inveresk—a man of great talents, whose Memoirs of himself, still in MS., are said to be highly curious.]

She immediately sprung from her chair, and, throwing her arms around his neck, exclaimed, 'Ah, my son! my son! I have found you at last!'

"She afterwards told him, that if he had kept his austere looks, and continued to *gloom*, he might have escaped detection some time longer; 'but your old roguish smile,' added she, 'betrayed you at once.'"

Having revisited the seat of his family, then possessed by his cousin, and spent a day or two at Glasgow, the scene of his early studies and frolics, Smollett returned to England, in order to undertake the direction of the *Critical Review*, a work which was established under patronage of the Tories and High-Church party; and which was intended to maintain their principles in opposition to the *Monthly Review*, conducted according to the sentiments of Whigs and Low-Churchmen.

Smollett's taste and talents qualified him highly for periodical criticism, as well as the promptitude of his wit, and the ready application which he could make of a large store of miscellaneous learning and acquired knowledge. But, on the other hand, he was always a hasty, and often a prejudiced judge; and, while he himself applied the critical scourge without mercy, he could not endure that those who felt his blows should either wince or complain under his chastisement. To murmur against his decrees was the sure way to incur further marks of his resentment, and thus his criticism deviated still more widely from dispassionate discussion, as the passions of the reviewer and of the author became excited into a clamorous contest of mutual rejoinder, recrimination, and abuse. Many petty squabbles, which occurred to tease and embitter the life of Smollett, and to diminish the respectability with which his talents must otherwise have invested him, had their origin in his situation as editor of the *Critical Review*. He was engaged in one controversy with the notorious Shebbeare, in another with Dr. Grainger,[1] the elegant author of the beautiful *Ode to Solitude*, and in several wrangles and brawls with persons of less celebrity.

But the most unlucky controversy in which his critical office involved our author, was that with Admiral Knowles, who had published a pamphlet vindicating his own conduct in the secret expedition against Rochfort, which disgracefully miscarried, in 1757. This defence was examined in the *Critical Review*; and Smollett, himself the author of the article, used the following intemperate expressions concerning Admiral Knowles. "He

[1] [See Appendix, No. II.]

is an admiral without conduct, an engineer without knowledge, an officer without resolution, and a man without veracity." The admiral commenced a prosecution against the printer of the *Review*, declaring at the same time that he desired only to discover the author of the paragraph, and, should he prove a gentleman, to demand satisfaction of a different nature. This decoy, for such it proved, was the most effectual mode which could have been devised to draw the high-spirited Smollett within the danger of the law. When the court were about to pronounce judgment in the case, Smollett appeared, and took the consequences upon himself, and Admiral Knowles redeemed the pledge he had given, by enforcing judgment for a fine of one hundred pounds, and obtaining a sentence against the defendant of three months' imprisonment. How the Admiral reconciled his conduct to the rules usually observed by gentlemen, we are not informed; but the proceeding seems to justify even Smollett's strength of expression, when he terms him an officer without resolution, and a man without veracity. This imprisonment took place in 1759, and was, as we have stated already, the most memorable result of the various quarrels in which his duty as a critic engaged Dr. Smollett. We resume the account of his literary labours, which our detail of these disputes has something interrupted.

About 1757, Smollett compiled and published without his name, a useful and entertaining collection, entitled, *A Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages, digested in a chronological series; the whole exhibiting a clear view of the Customs, Manners, Religion, Government, Commerce, and Natural History of most Nations of the Known World; illustrated with a variety of Genuine Charts, Maps, Plans, Heads, etc.*, in 7 vols. 12mo. This collection introduced to the British public several voyages which were otherwise little known, and contained, amongst other articles not before published, Smollett's own account of the *Expedition to Carthagena*, of which he had given a short sketch in the *Adventures of Roderick Random*.

In the same year, 1757, the farce or comedy of *The Reprisals, or the Tars of Old England*, was written and acted, to animate the people against the French, with whom we were then at war. In pursuance of this plan, every species of national prejudice is called up and appealed to, and the Frenchman is represented as the living representative and original of all the caricature prints and ballads against the eaters of *soupe maigre*, and wearers of wooden shoes. The sailors are drawn to the life, as

the sailors of Smollett always are. The Scotchman and Irishman are hit off with the touch of a caricaturist of skill and spirit. But the story of the piece is as trivial as possible, and, on the whole, it forms no marked exception to the observation, that successful novelists have been rarely distinguished by excellence in dramatic composition.

Garrick's generous conduct to Smollett upon this occasion, fully obliterated all recollection of old differences. The manager allowed the author his benefit on the sixth, instead of the ninth night of the piece, abated certain charges or advances usually made on such occasions, and himself performed Lusignan on the same evening, in order to fill the theatre.[1] Still, it seems, reports were in circulation that Smollett had spoken unkindly of Garrick, which called forth the following contradiction in a letter which our author addressed to that celebrated performer.

"In justice to myself, I take the liberty to assure you, that if any person accuses me of having spoken disrespectfully of Mr. Garrick, of having hinted that he solicited for my farce, or had interested views in bringing it upon the stage, he does me wrong, upon the word of a gentleman. The imputation is altogether false and malicious. Exclusive of other considerations, I could not be such an idiot to talk in that strain when my own interest so immediately required a different sort of conduct. Perhaps the same insidious methods have been taken to inflame former animosities, which on my part are forgotten and self-condemned. I must own you have acted in this affair of the farce with that candour, openness, and cordiality, which even mortify my pride, while they lay me under the most sensible obligation; and I shall not rest satisfied until I

[1] ["Mr. Garrick was applied to, I suppose with some fears of the author, lest his farce should not meet a favourable reception from a man whom he had so grossly slandered. However, the manager approved the piece; and he acted it in the best manner he could. *The Tars of Old England* procured the author a pretty large benefit; and here Mr. Garrick had the satisfaction to gratify Smollett by not asking the price which might in rigour have been exacted by the managers for the charges of a benefit. Of this Mr. Garrick apprised him in the following letter:—*Nov.* 26, 1757.—Sir,—There was a mistake made by our office-keepers to your prejudice, which has given me much uneasiness. Though the expense of our theatre every night amounts to £90 and upwards, yet we take no more from gentlemen who write for the theatre, and who produce an original performance, than 60 guineas; they who only alter an old play pay 80 guineas for the expense, as in the case of *Amphytrion;* this occasioned the mistake, which I did not discover till lately. Though it is very reasonable to take fourscore pounds for the expense of the house, yet, as we have not yet regulated this matter, I cannot possibly agree that Dr. Smollett shall be the first precedent. I have enclosed a draft upon Mr. Clutterbuck for the sum due to you.—I am, most sincerely, your most obedient humble servant, D. GARRICK.' "—Davies' *Life of Garrick*, vol. i., p. 319.]

have an opportunity to convince Mr. Garrick that my gratitude is at least as warm as any other of my passions. Meanwhile, I profess myself,

" Sir,
" Your most humble servant,
" T. SMOLLETT." [1]

In the beginning of the year 1758, Smollett published his *Complete History of England, deduced from the Descent of Julius Cæsar to the Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle, in* 1748; in four volumes 4to. It is said that this voluminous work, containing the history of thirteen centuries, and written with uncommon spirit and correctness of language, was composed and finished for the press within fourteen months, one of the greatest exertions of facility of composition ever recorded in the history of literature. Within a space so brief it could not be expected that new facts should be produced; and all the novelty which Smollett's history could present must needs consist in the mode of stating facts, or in the reflections deduced from them. In this work, the author fully announced his political principles, which, notwithstanding his Whig education, were those of a modern Tory, and a favourer of the monarchial part of our constitution. For such a strain of sentiment, some readers will think no apology necessary; and by others none which we might propose would be listened to. Smollett has made his own defence, in a letter to Dr. Moore, dated 2nd January, 1758.

" I deferred answering your kind letter, until I should have finished my history, which is now completed. I was agreeably surprised to hear that my work had met with any approbation at Glasgow, for it was not at all calculated for that meridian. The last volume will, I doubt not, be severely censured by the west-country Whigs of Scotland.

" I desire you will divest yourself of prejudice, at least as much

[1] [" A short time after the representation of *The Reprisal*, the following panegyric on Mr. Garrick, mingled with some disparaging reflections on Mr. Moore, the author of *The Gamester*, and Dr. Brown, the author of *Barbarossa*, appeared in the *Critical Review*, unquestionably with the approbation of Smollett, and probably intended by him as a public retraction of the very unfair representation he had given in *Roderick Random* of his treatment of him respecting *The Regicide*.

" We often see this inimitable actor labouring through five tedious acts to support a lifeless piece, with a mixture of pity and indignation, and cannot help wishing there were in this age good poets to write for one who so well deserves them.

' Quidquid calcaverit hic rosa fiet.'

" He has the art, like the Lydian king, of turning all that he touches into gold, and can ensure applause to every fortunate bard, from inimitable Shakspeare and Old Ben, to gentle Neddy Moore, and the author of *Barbarossa*."—Anderson's *Life of Smollett*, p. 56.]

as you can, before you begin to peruse it, and consider well the facts before you pass judgment. Whatever may be its defect, I protest before God I have, as far as in me lay, adhered to truth, without espousing any faction, though I own I sat down to write with a warm side to those principles in which I was educated; but in the course of my enquiries, some of the Whig ministers turned out such a set of sordid knaves, that I could not help stigmatising them for their want of integrity and sentiment."

In another letter to Dr. Moore, dated Chelsea, September 28, he expresses himself as follows:—

"I speak not of the few who think like philosophers, abstracted from the notions of the vulgar. The little petulant familiarities of our friend I can forgive, in consideration of the good-will he has always manifested towards me and my concerns. He is mistaken, however, in supposing that I have imbibed priestly notions; I consider the church not as a religious, but a political establishment, so minutely interwoven in our constitution, that the one cannot be detached from the other, without the most imminent danger of destruction to both. The use which our friend makes of the *Critical Review* is whimsical enough;[1] but I shall be glad if he uses it at any rate. I have not had leisure to do much in that work for some time past, therefore I hope you will not ascribe the articles indiscriminately to me; for I am equally averse to the praise and censure that belong to other men. Indeed, I am sick of both, and wish to God my circumstances would allow me to consign my pen to oblivion. I really believe that mankind grow every day more malicious.

"You will not be sorry to hear, that the weekly sale of the History has increased to above ten thousand. A French gentleman of talents and erudition has undertaken to translate it into that language, and I have promised to supply him with corrections."

As a powerful political party were insulted, and, as they alleged, misrepresented in Smollett's history, they readily lent their influence and countenance to the proprietors of Rapin's *History*, who, alarmed at the extensive sale of Smollett's rival work, deluged the public with criticisms and invectives against the author and his book. In process of time the controversy slept, and the main fault of his history was found to be, that the haste with which the author had accomplished his task had necessarily occasioned his sitting down contented with superficial, and sometimes inaccurate, information.

In the course of 1760 and 1761, *The Adventures of Sir Lancelot Greaves* appeared, in detached portions, in various numbers of

[1] Dr. Moore's friend was so much enraged at some criticisms in that Review, that he continued to take it for no other purpose than that he might read all the publications censured by it, and none of those which it praised.

the *British Magazine* or *Monthly Repository*, being written for the purpose of giving some spirit and popularity to that miscellany. Smollett appears to have executed his task with very little premeditation. During a part of the time he was residing at Paxton, in Berwickshire, on a visit to the late George Home, Esq., and when post-time drew near, he used to retire for half an hour or an hour, to prepare the necessary quantity of *copy*, as it is technically called in the printing-house, which he never gave himself the trouble to correct, or even to read over. *Sir Lancelot Greaves* was published separately, in 1762.

The idea of this work was probably suggested to our author during his labours upon *Don Quixote*, and the plan forms a sort of corollary to that celebrated romance. The leading imperfection is the utter extravagance of the story, as applicable to England, and to the period when it is supposed to have happened. In Spain, ere the ideas of chivalry were extinct amongst that nation of romantic Hidalgos, the turn of Don Quixote's frenzy seems not altogether extravagant, and the armour which he assumed was still the ordinary garb of battle. But in England, and in modern times, that a young, amiable, and otherwise sensible man, acquainted also with the romance of Cervantes, should have adopted a similar whim, gives good foundation for the obvious remark of Ferret: "What! you set up for a modern Don Quixote! The scheme is too stale and extravagant: what was a humorous and well-timed satire in Spain near two hundred years ago, will make but a sorry jest, when really acted from affectation, at this time of day in England." To this Sir Lancelot replies, by a tirade which does not remove the objection so shrewdly stated by the misanthrope, affirming that he only warred against the foes of virtue and decorum; or, in his own words, "had assumed the armour of his forefathers, to remedy evils which the law cannot reach, to detect fraud and treason, abase insolence, mortify pride, discourage slander, disgrace immodesty, and stigmatise ingratitude."

The degree of sanity which the amiable enthusiast possesses ought to have shown him, that the generous career he had undertaken would be much better accomplished without his armour, than with that superfluous and ridiculous appendage; and that for all the purposes of reformation to be effected in England, his pocket-book, filled with banknotes, would be a better auxiliary than either sword or lance. In short, it becomes clear to the reader that Sir Lancelot wears panoply only that

his youthful elegance and address, his bright armour and generous courser, may make him the more exact counterpart to the Knight of La Mancha.

If it be unnatural that Sir Lancelot should become a knight-errant, the whim of Crowe, the captain of a merchant vessel, adopting at second hand the same folly, is, on the same grounds, still more exceptionable. There is nothing in the honest seaman's life or profession which renders it at all possible that he should have caught contagion from the insanity of Sir Lancelot. But, granting the author's premises—and surely we often make large concessions with less advantage in prospect—the quantity of comic humour which Smollett has extracted out of Crowe and Crabshaw, has as much hearty mirth in it as can be found even in his more finished compositions. The inferior characters are all sketched with the same bold, free, and peculiar touch that distinguishes this powerful writer; and, besides these we have named, Ferret, and Clarke, the kind-hearted attorney's clerk, with several subordinate personages, have all the vivacity of Smollett's strong pencil. Aurelia Darnel is by far the most feminine, and, at the same time, ladylike person, to whom the author has introduced us. There is also some novelty of situation and incident, and Smollett's recent imprisonment in the King's Bench, for the attack on Admiral Knowles, enabled him to enrich his romance with a portrait of the unfortunate Theodore, King of Corsica, and other companions in his captivity, whose misfortunes or frolics had conducted them to that place of imprisonment.

Smollett's next labour was to lend his aid in finishing that useful compendium, *The Modern Universal History*, to which he contributed the Histories of France, Italy, and Germany. In the year 1761, he published, in detached numbers, his *Continuation of the History of England*, which he carried on until he brought the narrative down to 1765. The sale of this work was very extensive; and although Smollett acquired by both histories about £2000, which, in those days, was a large sum, yet the bookseller is said to have made £1000 clear profit on the very day he made his bargain, by transferring it to a brother of the trade. This Continuation, appended as it usually is to the *History of England* by Hume, forms a classical and standard work. It is not our present province to examine the particular merits of Smollett as an historian; but it cannot be denied that, as a clear and distinct narrative of facts, strongly and vigorously told, with a laudable regard to truth and impartiality the,

Continuation may vie with our best historical works. The author was incapable of being swayed by fear or favour; and where his judgment is influenced, we can see that he was only misled by an honest belief in the truth of his own arguments. At the same time, the Continuation, like Smollett's original *History*, has the defects incident to hurried composition, and likewise those which naturally attach themselves to contemporary narrative. Smollett had no access to those hidden causes of events which time brings forth in the slow progress of ages; and his work is chiefly compiled from those documents of a public and general description, which often contain rather the colourable pretexts which statesmen are pleased to assign for their actions, than the real motives themselves. The English history, it is true, suffers less than those of other countries from this restriction of materials; for there are so many eyes upon our public proceedings, and they undergo such sifting discussion, both in and out of Parliament, that the actual motives of those in whose hands government is vested for the time, become speedily suspected, even if they are not actually avowed or unveiled. Upon the whole, with all its faults and deficiencies, it may be long ere we have a better History of Britain, during this latter period, than is to be found in the pages of Smollett.

Upon the accession of George III., and the commencement of Lord Bute's administration, Smollett's pen was employed in the defence of the young monarch's government, in a weekly paper called *The Briton*, which was soon silenced and driven out of the field by the celebrated *North Briton*, conducted by John Wilkes. Smollett had been on terms of kindness with this distinguished demagogue, and had twice applied to his friendship—once for the kind purpose of obtaining the dismission of Dr. Johnson's black servant, Francis Barber, from the navy, into which he had inconsiderately entered; [1] and again, to mediate betwixt himself

[1] ["Johnson's negro servant, Francis Barber, having left him, and been some time at sea, not pressed, as has been supposed, but with his own consent, it appears, from a letter to John Wilkes, Esq., from Dr. Smollett, that his master kindly interested himself in procuring his release from a state of life of which Johnson always expressed the utmost abhorrence. He once said, 'No man will be a sailor who has contrivance enough to get himself into a jail; for being in a ship is being in a jail, with the chance of being drowned;' and at another time, 'A man in a jail has more room, better food, and commonly better company.' The letter was as follows:—'CHELSEA, 16*th March*, 1759.—Dear Sir,—I am again your petitioner, in behalf of that great CHAM of literature, Samuel Johnson. His black servant, whose name is Francis Barber, has been pressed on board the Stag Frigate, Captain Angel, and our lexicographer is in great distress.

and Admiral Knowles, in the matter of the prosecution. Closer ties than these are readily dissolved before the fire of politics. The friends became political opponents; and Smollett, who had to plead an unpopular cause to unwilling auditors, and who, as a Scotchman, shared deeply and personally in that unpopularity, was compelled to give up *The Briton*, more, it would seem, from lack of spirit in his patron Lord Bute, to sustain the contest any longer, than from any deficiency of zeal on his own part. So, at least, we may interpret the following passage, in a letter which he wrote from Italy to Caleb Whiteford, in 1770:—

"I hope you will not discontinue your endeavours to represent faction and false patriotism in their true colours, though I believe the ministry little deserves that any man of genius should draw his pen in their defence. They seem to inherit the absurd stoicism of Lord Bute, who set himself up as a pillory, to be pelted by all the blackguards of England, upon the supposition that they would grow tired and leave off. I don't find that your ministers take any pains even to vindicate their moral characters from the foulest imputations; I would never desire a stronger proof of a bad heart, than a total disregard of reputation. A late nobleman, who had been a member of several administrations, owned to me, that one good writer was of more importance to the government than twenty placemen in the House of Commons."

In 1763, Smollett lent his assistance, or at least his name, to a translation of Voltaire's works, and also to a compilation entitled, *The Present State of all Nations, containing a Geographical, Natural, Commercial, and Political History of all the Countries of the known World.*

About this time, Elizabeth, an amiable and accomplished young person, the only offspring of Smollett's marriage, and to whom her father was devotedly attached, died in the fifteenth year of her life, leaving her parents overwhelmed with the deepest sorrow.

He says the boy is a sickly lad, of a delicate frame, and particularly subject to a malady in his throat, which renders him very unfit for his Majesty's service. You know what matter of animosity the said Johnson has against you; and I dare say you desire no better opportunity of resenting it, than that of laying him under an obligation. He was humble enough to desire my assistance on this occasion, though he and I were never Cater-cousins; and I gave him to understand that I would make application to my friend Mr. Wilkes, who perhaps, by his interest with Dr. Hay and Mr. Elliot, might be able to procure the discharge of his lacquey. It would be superfluous to say more on the subject, which I leave to your own consideration; but I cannot let slip this opportunity of declaring, that I am, with the most inviolable esteem and attachment, dear sir, your affectionate, obliged, humble servant, T. SMOLLETT.' "—Croker's *Boswell*, vol. i., p. 337-8.]

Ill health aided the effects of grief, and it was under these circumstances that Smollett undertook a journey to France and Italy, in which countries he resided from 1763 to 1766. Soon after his return in 1766, he published his *Travels through France and Italy, containing Observations on Character, Customs, Religion, Government, Police, Commerce, Arts, and Antiquities, with a particular Description of the Town, Territory, and Climate of Nice; to which is added, a Register of the Weather, kept during a Residence of Eighteen Months in that City;* in 2 vols. 8vo, in the form of letters to his friends in England, from different parts of those countries.

Smollett's *Travels* are distinguished by acuteness of remark, and shrewdness of expression—by strong sense and pointed humour; but the melancholy state of the author's mind induced him to view all the ordinary objects from which travellers receive pleasure, with cynical contempt. Although so lately a sufferer by the most injurious national prejudices, he failed not to harbour and cherish all those which he himself had formerly adopted against the foreign countries through which he travelled. Nature had either denied Smollett the taste necessary to understand and feel the beauties of art, or else his embittered state of mind had, for the time, entirely deprived him of the power of enjoying them.

The harsh censures which he passes on the Venus de Medicis, and upon the Pantheon; and the sarcasm with which his criticisms are answered by Sterne,[1] are both well known. Yet, be it said without offence to the memory of that witty and elegant writer, it is more easy to assume, in composition, an air of alternate gaiety and sensibility, than to practise the virtues of generosity and benevolence, which Smollett exercised during his

[1] ["The learned Smelfungus," says Sterne, in allusion to Smollett, "travelled from Boulogne to Paris, from Paris to Rome, and so on; but he set out with the spleen and jaundice; and every object he passed by was discoloured or distorted. He wrote an account of them; but 'twas nothing but the account of his miserable feelings. I met Smelfungus in the grand portico of the Pantheon—he was just coming out of it. '*'Tis nothing but a huge cock-pit,*' said he. 'I wish you had said nothing worse of the Venus of Medicis,' replied I; for in passing through Florence, I had heard he had fallen foul upon the goddess, and used her worse than a common strumpet, without the least provocation in nature.

"I popp'd upon Smelfungus again at Turin, in his return home; and a sad tale of sorrowful adventures he had to tell, 'wherein he spoke of moving accidents by flood and field, and of the cannibals that each other eat; the Anthropophagi.' He had been flay'd alive, and bedevil'd, and used worse than St. Bartholomew at every stage he had come at. 'I'll tell it,' cried Smelfungus, 'to the world.'—'You had better tell it,' said I, 'to your physician.'"—*Sentimental Journey.*]

whole life, though often, like his own Matthew Bramble, under the disguise of peevishness and irritability. Sterne's writings show much flourish concerning virtues of which his life is understood to have produced little fruit; the temper of Smollett was

> ——— " like a lusty winter,
> Frosty, but kindly."

On his return to Britain, in 1766, he visited Scotland for the last time, and had the pleasure of receiving a parent's last embrace. His health was now totally ruined. Constant rheumatism, and the pain arising from a neglected ulcer, which had got into a bad state, rendered him a victim to excruciating agonies. He afterwards recovered in a great degree, by applying mercurial ointment, and using the solution of corrosive sublimate. He gives a full account of the process of the cure in a letter to Dr. Moore, which concludes thus: " Had I been as well in summer, I should have exquisitely enjoyed my expedition to Scotland, which was productive of nothing to me but misery and disgust. Between friends, I am now convinced that my brain was in some measure affected; for I had a kind of *coma vigil* upon me from April to November without intermission.[1] In consideration of these circumstances, I know you will forgive all my peevishness and discontent; and tell good Mrs. Moore, to whom I present my most cordial respects, that, with regard

[1] [" The remarkable expression of a *Coma Vigil*," says D'Israeli, " difficult to explain, may be described by a verse of Shakspeare, in his antithetical account of love, a passion made up of contrarieties. Thus the *Coma Vigil* was

> ' Still-waking sleep! that is not what it is.'
> *Calamities of Authors*, vol. i., p. 22.

" Pope partook of a calamity not uncommon in the family of genius, and fell into that state of exhaustion, which Smollett once experienced during half a year, of a ' *Coma Vigil*,' an affection of the brain, where the principle of life is so reduced, that all external objects appear to be passing in a dream; a sort of torpid indistinct existence. This curious circumstance is related by Spence. ' His perpetual application (after he set to study of himself) reduced him in four years to so bad a state of health, that after trying physicians in vain, he resolved to give way to his distemper and *sat down calmly in a full expectation of death in a short time.* Under this thought he wrote letters to take *a last farewell* of some of his more particular friends, and amongst the rest one to the Abbé Southcot. The Abbé was extremely concerned, both for his very ill state of health, and the resolution he said he had taken. He thought there might yet be hopes, and went immediately to Dr. Radcliffe, with whom he was well acquainted, told him Mr. Pope's case, got full directions from him, and carried them down to Mr. Pope in Windsor Forest. The chief thing, the doctor ordered him, was to apply less, and to ride every day; the following his advice soon restored him to his health."—*Quarterly Review*, July, 1820.]

to me, she has as yet seen nothing but the wrong side of the tapestry."

Finding himself at liberty to resume his literary labours, Smollett published, in 1769, the political satire, called *The Adventures of an Atom*, in which are satirised the several leaders of political parties, from 1754 till the dissolution of Lord Chatham's administration. His inefficient patron, Lord Bute, is not spared in this work; and Chatham is severely treated under the name of Jowler. The inconsistency of this great minister, in encouraging the German war, seems to have altered Smollett's opinion of his patriotism; and he does his acknowledged talents far less than justice, endeavouring by every means to undervalue the successes of his brilliant administration, or to impute them to causes independent of his measures. The chief purpose of the work (besides that of giving the author the opportunity to raise his hand, like that of Ishmael, against every man) is to inspire a national horror of continental connections.

Shortly after the publication of *The Adventures of an Atom*, disease again assailed Smollett with redoubled violence. Attempts being vainly made to obtain for him the office of Consul, in some port of the Mediterranean, he was compelled to seek a warmer climate, without better means of provision than his own precarious finances could afford.[1] The kindness of his distinguished friend and countryman, Dr. Armstrong (then abroad), procured for Dr. and Mrs. Smollett a house at Monte Novo, a village situated on the side of a mountain overlooking the sea, in the neighbourhood of Leghorn; a romantic and salutary abode, where he prepared for the press the last, and, like music "sweetest in the close," the most pleasing of his compositions, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*. This delightful work was published in 1771, in three volumes, 12mo, and very favourably received by the public.

The very ingenious scheme of describing the various effects produced upon different members of the same family by the same objects, was not original, though it has been supposed to be so. Anstey, the facetious author of the *New Bath Guide*, had employed it six or seven years before *Humphry Clinker* appeared. But Anstey's diverting satire was but a light sketch, compared

[1] ["Smollett had written both for and against ministers, perhaps not always from independent motives; but to find the man whose genius has given exhilaration to millions, thus reduced to beg, and to be refused the means that might have smoothed the pillow of this death-bed in a foreign country, is a circumstance which fills the mind rather too strongly with the recollection of Cervantes."—Campbell.]

to the finished and elaborate manner in which Smollett has, in the first place, identified his characters, and then fitted them with language, sentiments, and powers of observation, in exact correspondence with their talents, temper, condition, and disposition.

The portrait of Matthew Bramble, in which Smollett described his own peculiarities, using towards himself the same rigid anatomy which he exercised upon others, is unequalled in the line of fictitious composition. It is peculiarly striking to observe, how often, in admiring the shrewd and sound sense, active benevolence, and honourable sentiments combined in Matthew, we lose sight of the humorous peculiarities of his character, and with what effect they are suddenly recalled to our remembrance, just at the time and in the manner when we least expect them. All shrewish old maids, and simple waiting-women, which shall hereafter be drawn, must be contented with the praise of approaching in merit to Mrs. Tabitha Bramble and Winifred Jenkins. The peculiarities of the hot-headed young Cantab, and the girlish romance of his sister, are admirably contrasted with the sense and pettish half-playful misanthropy of their uncle; and Humphry Clinker (who by the way resembles Strap, supposing that excellent person to have a turn towards methodism) is, as far as he goes, equally delightful. Captain Lismahago was probably no violent caricature, allowing for the manners of the time. We can remember a good and gallant officer who was said to have been his prototype, but believe the opinion was only entertained from the striking resemblance which he bore in externals to the doughty captain.

When *Humphry Clinker* appeared in London, the popular odium against the Scotch nation, which Wilkes and Churchill had excited, was not yet appeased, and Smollett had enemies amongst the periodical critics, who failed not to charge him with undue partiality to his own country. They observed, maliciously, but not untruly, that the cynicism of Matthew Bramble becomes gradually softened as he journeys northward, and that he who equally detested Bath and London, becomes wonderfully reconciled to walled cities and the hum of men, when he finds himself an inhabitant of the northern metropolis. It is not worth defending so excellent a work against so weak an objection. The author was a dying man, and his thoughts were turned towards the scenes of youthful gaiety and the abode of early friends, with a fond partiality, which, had they been even less deserving of his

attachment, would have been not only pardonable, but praiseworthy.

Moritur, et moiens dulces reminiscitur Argos.

Smollett failed not, as he usually did, to introduce himself, with the various causes which he had to complain of the world, into the pages of this delightful romance. He appears as Mr. Serle, and more boldly under his own name, and in describing his own mode of living, he satirises without mercy the bookmakers of the day, who had experienced his kindness without repaying him by gratitude. It does not, however, seem perfectly fair to make them atone for their ungracious return to his hospitality, by serving up their characters as a banquet to the public; and, in fact, it too much resembles the design of which Pallet accuses the Physician, of converting his guests into patients, in order to make him amends for the expense of the entertainment.

But criticism, whether candid or unjust, was soon to be of little consequence to the author. After the publication of his last work, he lingered through the summer, and at length, after enduring the vicissitudes of a wasting and painful disorder with unabated composure, the world lost Tobias Smollett, on the 21st October, 1771, at the untimely age of only fifty-one years. There is little doubt that grief for the loss of his daughter, a feeling of ungrateful neglect from those who were called upon to lend him assistance, a present sense of confined circumstances, which he was daily losing the power of enlarging by his own exertions, together with gloomy apprehensions for the future, materially aided the progress of the mortal disorder by which he was removed.[1]

More happy in this respect than Fielding, Smollett's grave at Leghorn is distinguished by a plain monument, erected by his widow, to which Dr. Armstrong, his constant and faithful friend, supplied the following spirited inscription:—

[1] ["Had Smollett lived a few years longer," says Dr. Anderson, "he must have inherited the estate of Bonhill, of about £1000 a-year, by the death of his cousin, Mr. Smollett, whose heir of entail he was; and who would, in all probability, have bequeathed him, what he could no longer retain, the rest of his fortune, of nearly the same value, both of which fell to his sister, Mrs. Telfer."—*Life of Smollett*, p. 102.]

Hic ossa conduntur

TOBIÆ SMOLLETT, Scoti;

Qui, prosapia generosa et antiqua natus,
Priscæ virtutis exemplar emicuit;
Aspectu ingenuo,
Corpore valido,
Pectore animoso,
Indole apprime benigna,
Et fere supra facultates munifica,
Insignis.
Ingenio feraci, faceto, versatili,
Omnigenæ fere doctrinæ mire capaci,
Varia fabularum dulcedine,
Vitam moresque hominum,
Ubertate summa ludens, depinxit.
Adverso, interim, nefas! tali tantoque alumno
Nisi quo satyræ opipare supplebat,
Seculo impio, ignavo, fatuo,
Quo musæ vix nisi nothæ
Mecænatulis Britannicis
Fovebantur.
In memoriam
Optimi et amabilis omnino viri,
Permultis amicis desiderati,
Hocce marmor
Dilectissima simul et amantissima conjux
L. M.
Sacravit.

In the year 1774, a column was erected to Smollett's memory near the house in which he was born, by his cousin, James Smollett, Esq. of Bonhill, with the following nervous and classical inscription, written by Professor George Stewart of Edinburgh, and partly by the late John Ramsay, Esq. of Ochtertyre, and

corrected by Dr. Johnson. The lines printed in Italics are by the latter:—

Siste, viator!
Si leporis ingeniique venam benignam,
Si morum callidissimum pictorem,
Unquam es miratus,
Immorare paululum memoriæ
TOBIÆ SMOLLETT, M.D.
Viri virtutibus hisce
Quas in homine et cive
Et laudes et imiteris,
Haud mediocriter ornati:
Qui in literis variis versatus,
Postquam, felicitate sibi propria,
Sese posteris commendaverat,
Morte acerba raptus
Anno ætatis 51.
Eheu! quam procul a patria!
Prope Liburni portum in Italia,
Jacet sepultus.
Tali tantoque viro, patruelo suo,
Cui in decursu lampada
Se potius tradidisse decuit,
Hanc Columnam,
Amoris, eheu! inane monumentum
In ipsis Levinæ ripis,
Quas versiculis sub exitu vitæ illustratas,
Primis infans vagitibus personuit,
Ponendam curavit
JACOBUS SMOLLETT de Bonhill.
Abi et reminiscere,
Hoc quidem honore,
Non modo defuncti memoriæ,
Verum etiam exemplo, prospectum esse;
Aliis enim, si modo digni sint,
Idem erit virtutis præmium! [1]

[1] [Dr. Johnson visited Mr. James Smollett, at Bonhill, on Thursday, 28th October, 1773; and the reader will find an account of the Doctor's emendations on the Inscription of the Pillar in Croker's *Boswell*, vol. iii., p. 61-63.

The following is an extract from D'Israeli's *Calamities of Authors*:—

"Of most 'Authors by profession,' who has displayed a more fruitful genius, and exercised more intense industry, with a loftier sense of his independence, than Smollett? But look into his life, and enter into his feelings, and you will be shocked at the disparity of his situation with the

The widow of Smollett long continued an inhabitant of the neighbourhood of Leghorn, supporting herself in obscurity and with difficulty, upon the small remnant of fortune he had been able to bequeath to her. We remember a benefit play being performed on her account, at Edinburgh, in which Houston Stewart Nicholson, Esq., an amateur performer, appeared in the part of Pierre. The profits are said to have amounted to £300. A prologue, written for the occasion, by Mr. Graham of Gartmore, was spoken by the late Mr. Woods, of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.

Smollett's *Ode to Independence*, the most characteristic of his poetical works, was published, two years after his death, by the Messrs. Foulis of Glasgow. The mythological commencement is eminently beautiful.

His name was appended to a version of Telemachus, as, during his life, it had appeared to a translation of Gil Blas, to which it is supposed he contributed little or nothing more. In 1785, a farce, called *The Israelites*, or *The Pampered Nabob*, was acted on the Covent Garden stage, for the benefit of Mr. Aiken. It was ascribed to Smollett on very dubious evidence, was indifferently received, and has never since appeared, either on the stage or in print.

The person of Smollett was eminently handsome, his features

genius of the man. His life was a succession of struggles, vexations, and disappointments; yet of success in his writings. Smollett, who is a great poet, though he has written little in verse, and whose rich genius had composed the most original pictures of human life, was compelled by his wants to debase his name by setting it to Voyages and Translations which he never could have read. When he had worn himself down in the service of the public, or the booksellers, there remained not, of all his slender remunerations, in the last stage of life, sufficient to convey him to a cheap country and a restorative air, on the Continent. The father may have thought himself fortunate, that the daughter whom he loved with more than common affection was no more to share in his wants; but the husband had by his side the faithful companion of his life, left without a wreck of fortune. Smollett gradually perishing in a foreign land, neglected by an admiring public, and without fresh resources from the booksellers, who were receiving the income of his works—threw out his injured feelings in the character of *Bramble;* the warm generosity of his temper, but not his genius, seemed fleeting with his breath. Yet when Smollett died, and his widow in a foreign land was raising a plain monument over his dust, her love and her piety but "made the little less." She perished in friendless solitude! Yet Smollett dead—soon an ornamented column is raised at the place of his birth, while the grave of the author seemed to multiply the editions of his works. There are indeed grateful feelings in the public at large for a favourite author; but the awful testimony of those feelings by its gradual progress, must appear beyond the grave! They visit the column consecrated by his name, and his features are most loved, most venerated in the bust."—*Calamities*, vol. i., p. 17.]

prepossessing, and, by the joint testimony of all his surviving friends, his conversation in the highest degree instructive and amusing. Of his disposition, those who have read his works (and who has not done so?) may form a very accurate estimate; for in each of them he has presented, and sometimes under various points of view, the leading features of his own character, without disguising the most unfavourable of them. Nay, there is room to believe that he rather exaggerated than softened that cynical turn of temper, which was the principal fault of his disposition, and which engaged him in so many quarrels. It is remarkable that all his heroes, from Roderick Random downward, possess a haughty, fierce irritability of disposition, until the same features appear softened, and rendered venerable by age and philosophy, in Matthew Bramble. The sports in which they most delight are those which are attended with disgrace, mental pain, and bodily mischief to others; and their humanity is never represented as interrupting the course of their frolics. We know not that Smollett had any other marked failing, save that which he himself had so often and so liberally acknowledged. When unseduced by his satirical propensities, he was kind, generous, and humane to others; bold, upright, and independent in his own character; stooped to no patron, sued for no favour, but honestly and honourably maintained himself on his literary labours; when, if he was occasionally employed in work which was beneath his talents, the disgrace must remain with those who saved not such a genius from the degrading drudgery of compiling and translating. He was a doating father, and an affectionate husband; and the warm zeal with which his memory was cherished by his surviving friends, showed clearly the reliance which they placed upon his regard. Even his resentments, though often hastily adopted, and incautiously expressed, were neither ungenerous nor enduring. He was open to conviction, and ready to make both acknowledgment and allowance when he had done injustice to others, willing also to forgive and to be reconciled when he had received it at their hand.

Churchill,[1] and other satirists, falsely ascribe to Smollett the

[1] The article upon *The Rosciad*, in the *Critical Review* (that fertile mother of all the dissensions in which Smollett was engaged), was so severe as to call forth the bard's bitter resentment, in the 2nd edition; where, ascribing the offensive article to Smollett, in which he was mistaken, he thus apostrophises him:

> "Whence could arise this mighty critic spleen,
> The Muse a trifler, and her theme so mean?
> What had I done, that angry heav'n should send

mean passion of literary envy, to which his nature was totally a stranger. The manner in which he mentions Fielding and Richardson in the account of the literature of the century, shows how much he understood, and how liberally he praised, the merit of those who, in the view of the world, must have been regarded as his immediate rivals. "The genius of Cervantes," in his generous expression, "was transfused into the novels of Fielding, who painted the characters, and ridiculed the follies of life, with equal strength, humour, and propriety;"—a passage which we record with pleasure, as a proof that the disagreement which existed betwixt Smollett and Fielding did not prevent his estimating with justice, and recording in suitable terms, the merits of the Father of the English Novel. His historian, with equal candour, proceeds to tell his reader that "the laudable aim of enlisting the passions on the side of virtue was successfully pursued by Richardson, in his *Pamela*, *Clarissa*, and *Grandison*, a species of writing equally new and extraordinary, where, mingled with much superfluity and impertinence, we find a sublime system of ethics, an amazing knowledge and command of human nature." [1]

> The bitterest foe where most I wish'd a friend?
> Oft hath my tongue been wanton at thy name,
> And hail'd the honours of thy matchless fame.
> For me let hoary *Fielding* bite the ground,
> So nobler *Pickle* stand superbly bound;
> From *Livy's* temples tear th'historic crown,
> Which, with more justice, blooms upon thine own," etc.

A poet of inferior note, author of a poem called *The Race*, has brought the same charge against Smollett, in still coarser terms.

[1] [Dr. Moore thus sums up his account of Smollett:—"The person of Dr. Smollett was stout and well proportioned, his countenance engaging, his manner reserved, with a certain air of dignity that seemed to indicate that he was not unconscious of his own powers. He was of a disposition so humane and generous, that he was ever ready to serve the unfortunate, and on some occasions to assist them beyond what his circumstances could justify. Though few could penetrate with more acuteness into character, yet none was more apt to overlook misconduct when attended with misfortune.

"He lived in an hospitable manner, but he despised that hospitality which is founded on ostentation, which entertains only those whose situations in life flatters the vanity of the entertainer, or such as can make returns of the same kind; that hospitality which keeps a debtor and creditor account of dinners. Smollett invited to his plain but plentiful table, the persons whose characters he esteemed, in whose conversation he delighted; and many for no other reason than because they stood in need of his countenance and protection.

"As nothing was more abhorrent to his nature than pertness or intrusion, few things could render him more indignant than a cold reception. To this, however, he imagined he had sometimes been exposed on his applications in

In leaving Smollett's personal for his literary character, it is impossible not to consider the latter as contrasted with that of his eminent contemporary, Fielding. It is true that such comparisons, though recommended by the example of Plutarch, are not in general the best mode of estimating individual merit. But, in the present case, the contemporary existence, the private history, accomplishments, talents, pursuits, and, unfortunately, the fates of these two great authors, are so closely allied, that it is scarce possible to name the one without exciting recollections of the other. Fielding and Smollett were both born in the highest rank of society, both educated to learned professions, yet both obliged to follow miscellaneous literature as the means of subsistence. Both were confined, during their lives, by the narrowness of their circumstances—both united a humorous cynicism with generosity and good-nature—both died of the diseases incident to a sedentary life, and to literary labour—and both drew their last breath in a foreign land, to which they retreated under the adverse circumstances of a decayed constitution, and an exhausted fortune.

Their studies were no less similar than their lives. They both wrote for the stage, and neither of them successfully. They both meddled in politics, and never obtained effectual patronage; they both wrote travels, in which they showed that their good-humour was wasted under the sufferings of their disease; and to conclude, they were both so eminently successful as novelists, that no other English author of that class has a right to be mentioned in the same breath with Fielding and Smollett.

If we compare the works of these two great masters yet more closely, we may assign to Fielding, with little hesitation, the

favour of others; for himself he never made an application to any great man in his life.

"Free from vanity, Smollett had a considerable share of pride, and great sensibility; his passions were easily moved, and too often impetuous when roused; he could not conceal his contempt of folly, his detestation of fraud, nor refrain from proclaiming his indignation against every instance of oppression.

"Though Smollett possessed a versatility of style in writing, which he could accommodate to every character, he had no suppleness in his conduct. His learning, diligence, and natural acuteness, would have rendered him eminent in the science of medicine, had he persevered in that profession; other parts of his character were ill suited for augmenting his practice. He could neither stoop to impose on credulity, nor humour caprice.

"He was of an intrepid, independent, imprudent disposition; equally incapable of deceit and adulation, and more disposed to cultivate the acquaintance of those he could serve than of those who could serve him. What wonder that a man of his character was not what is called successful in life!"]

praise of a higher and a purer taste than was shown by his rival; more elegance of composition and expression; a nearer approach to the grave irony of Swift and Cervantes; a great deal more address or felicity in the conduct of his story; and, finally, a power of describing amiable and virtuous characters, and of placing before us heroes, and especially heroines, of a much higher as well as more pleasing character than Smollett was able to present.

Thus the art and felicity with which the story of *Tom Jones* evolves itself, is nowhere found in Smollett's novels, where the heroes pass from one situation in life, and from one stage of society, to another totally unconnected, except that, as in ordinary life, the adventures recorded, though not bearing upon each other, or on the catastrophe, befall the same personage. Characters are introduced and dropped without scruple, and, at the end of the work, the hero is found surrounded by a very different set of associates from those with whom his fortune seemed at first indissolubly connected. Neither are the characters which Smollett designed should be interesting, half so amiable as his readers could desire. The low-minded Roderick Random, who borrows Strap's money, wears his clothes, and, rescued from starving by the attachment of that simple and kind-hearted adherent, rewards him by squandering his substance, receiving his attendance as a servant, and beating him when the dice ran against him, is not to be named in one day with the open-hearted, good-humoured, and noble-minded Tom Jones, whose libertinism (one particular omitted) is perhaps rendered but too amiable by his good qualities. We believe there are few readers who are not disgusted with the miserable reward assigned to Strap in the closing chapter of the novel. Five hundred pounds (scarce the value of the goods he had presented to his master), and the hand of a reclaimed street-walker, even when added to a Highland farm, seem but a poor recompense for his faithful and disinterested attachment. The Englishman is a hundred times more grateful to Partridge (whose morality is very questionable, and who follows Jones's fortunes with the self-seeking fidelity of a cur, who, while he loves his master, has his eye upon the flesh-pots) than Roderick Random shows himself towards the disinterested and generous attachment of poor Strap. There may be one way of explaining this difference of taste betwixt these great authors, by recollecting that, in Scotland, at that period, the absolute devotion of a follower to his master was something which entered into, and made part of the character

of the lower ranks in general; and therefore domestic fidelity was regarded as a thing more of course than in England, and received less gratitude than it deserved, in consideration of its more frequent occurrence.

But, to recur to our parallel betwixt the characters of Fielding and those of Smollett, we should do Jones great injustice by weighing him in the balance with the wild and ferocious Pickle, who — besides his gross and base brutality towards Emilia, besides his ingratitude to his uncle, and the savage propensity which he shows, in the pleasure he takes to torment others by practical jokes resembling those of a fiend in glee—exhibits a low and ungentlemanlike tone of thinking, only one degree higher than that of Roderick Random. The blackguard frolic of introducing a prostitute, in a false character, to his sister, is a sufficient instance of that want of taste and feeling which Smollett's admirers are compelled to acknowledge may be detected in his writings. It is yet more impossible to compare Sophia or Amelia to the females of Smollett, who (excepting Aurelia Darnel) are drawn as the objects rather of appetite than of affection, and excite no higher or more noble interest than might be created by the houris of the Mahomedan paradise.

It follows from this superiority on the side of Fielding that his novels exhibit, more frequently than those of Smollett, scenes of distress, which excite the sympathy and pity of the reader. No one can refuse his compassion to Jones, when, by a train of practices upon his generous and open character, he is expelled from his benefactor's house under the foulest and most heart-rending accusations; but we certainly sympathise very little in the distress of Pickle, brought on by his own profligate profusion, and enhanced by his insolent misanthropy. We are only surprised that his predominating arrogance does not weary out the benevolence of Hatchway and Pipes, and scarce think the ruined spendthrift deserves their persevering and faithful attachment.

But the deep and fertile genius of Smollett afforded resources sufficient to make up for these deficiencies; and when the full weight has been allowed to Fielding's superiority of taste and expression, his northern contemporary will still be found fit to balance the scale with his great rival. If Fielding had superior taste, the palm of more brilliancy of genius, more inexhaustible richness of invention, must in justice be awarded to Smollett. In comparison with his sphere, that in which Fielding walked was limited; and compared with the wealthy profusion of varied

character and incident which Smollett has scattered through his works, there is a poverty of composition about his rival. Fielding's fame rests on a single *chef d'œuvre;* and the art and industry which produced *Tom Jones,* was unable to rise to equal excellence in *Amelia.* Though, therefore, we may justly prefer *Tom Jones* as the most masterly example of an artful and well-told novel to any individual work of Smollett; yet *Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle,* and *Humphry Clinker,* do each of them far excel *Joseph Andrews* or *Amelia;* and, to descend still lower, *Jonathan Wild,* or *The Journey to the next World,* cannot be put into momentary comparison with *Sir Lancelot Greaves,* or *Ferdinand Count Fathom.*

Every successful novelist must be more or less a poet, even although he may never have written a line of verse. The quality of imagination is absolutely indispensable to him: his accurate power of examining and embodying human character and human passion, as well as the external face of nature, is not less essential; and the talent of describing well what he feels with acuteness, added to the above requisites, goes far to complete the poetic character. Smollett was, even in the ordinary sense, which limits the name to those who write verses, a poet of distinction; and, in this particular, superior to Fielding, who seldom aims at more than a slight translation from the classics.[1] Accordingly, if he is surpassed by Fielding in moving pity, the northern novelist soars far above him in his powers of exciting terror. Fielding has no passages which approach in sublimity to the robber-scene in *Count Fathom;* or to the terrible description of a sea-engagement, in which Roderick Random sits chained and exposed upon the poop, without the power of motion or exertion, during the carnage of a tremendous engagement. Upon many other occasions, Smollett's descriptions ascend to the sublime; and, in general, there is an air of romance in his writings, which raises his narratives above the level and easy course of ordinary life. He was, like a pre-eminent poet of our own day, a searcher of dark bosoms, and loved to paint characters under the strong agitation of fierce and stormy

[1] A judge, competent in the highest degree, has thus characterised Smollett's poetical compositions. "They have a portion of delicacy, not to be found in his novels; but they have not, like those prose fictions, the strength of a master's hand. Were he to live again, we might wish him to write more poetry, in the belief that his poetical talent would improve by exercise; but we should be glad that we had more novels just as they are."—*Specimens of the British Poets,* by Thomas Campbell, vol. vi. The truth is, that in these very novels are expended many of the ingredients both of grave and humorous poetry.

passions. Hence misanthropes, gamblers, and duellists, are as common in his work, as robbers in those of Salvator Rosa, and are drawn, in most cases, with the same terrible truth and effect. To compare *Ferdinand Count Fathom* to the *Jonathan Wild* of Fielding, would be perhaps unfair to the latter author; yet, the works being composed on the same plan (a very bad one, as we think) we cannot help placing them by the side of each other; when it becomes at once obvious that the detestable Fathom is a living and existing miscreant, at whom we shrink as if from the presence of an incarnate fiend, while the villain of Fielding seems rather a cold personification of the abstract principle of evil, so far from being terrible that, notwithstanding the knowledge of the world argued in many passages of his adventures, we are compelled to acknowledge him absolutely tiresome.

It is, however, chiefly in his profusion, which amounts almost to prodigality, that we recognise the superior richness of Smollett's fancy. He never shows the least desire to make the most either of a character, or a situation, or an adventure, but throws them together with a carelessness which argues unlimited confidence in his own powers. Fielding pauses to explain the principles of his art, and to congratulate himself and his readers on the felicity with which he constructs his narrative, or makes his characters evolve themselves in its progress. These appeals to the reader's judgment, admirable as they are, have sometimes the fault of being diffuse, and always the great disadvantage that they remind us we are perusing a work of fiction; and that the beings with whom we have been conversant during the perusal are but a set of evanescent phantoms, conjured up by a magician for our amusement. Smollett seldom holds communication with his readers in his own person. He manages his delightful puppet-show without thrusting his head beyond the curtain, like Gines de Passamont, to explain what he is doing; and hence, besides that our attention to the story remains unbroken, we are sure that the author, fully confident in the abundance of his materials, has no occasion to eke them out with extrinsic matter.

Smollett's sea-characters have been deservedly considered as inimitable; and the power with which he has diversified them, in so many instances, distinguishing the individual features of each honest tar, while each possesses a full proportion of professional manners and habits of thinking, is a most absolute proof of the richness of fancy with which the author was gifted,

and which we have noticed as his chief advantage over Fielding. Bowling, Trunnion, Hatchway, Pipes, and Crowe, are all men of the same class, habits, and tone of thinking, yet so completely differenced by their separate and individual characters, that we at once acknowledge them as distinct persons, while we see and allow that every one of them belongs to the old English navy. These striking portraits have now the merit which is cherished by antiquaries — they preserve the memory of the school of Benbow and Boscawen, whose manners are now banished from the quarterdeck to the forecastle. The naval officers of the present day, the splendour of whose actions has thrown into shadow the exploits of a thousand years, do not now affect the manners of foremast-men, and have shown how admirably well their duty can be discharged without any particular attachment to tobacco or flip, or the decided preference of a check shirt over a linen one.[1] But these, when memory carries them back thirty or forty years, must remember many a weather-beaten veteran, whose appearance, language, and sentiments free Smollett from the charge of extravagance in his characteristic sketches of British seamen of the last century.

In the comic part of their writings, we have already said, Fielding is pre-eminent in grave irony, a Cervantic species of pleasantry, in which Smollett is not equally successful. On the other hand, the Scotchman, notwithstanding the general opinion denies that quality to his countrymen, excels in broad and ludicrous humour. His fancy seems to run riot in accumulating ridiculous circumstances one upon another, to the utter destruction of all power of gravity; and perhaps no books ever written have excited such peals of inextinguishable laughter as those of Smollett. The descriptions which affect us thus powerfully, border sometimes upon what is called farce or caricature; but if it be the highest praise of pathetic composition that it draws forth tears, why should it not be esteemed the greatest excellence of the ludicrous that it compels laughter? the one tribute is at least as genuine an expression of natural feeling as the other; and he who can read the calamitous career of Trunnion and Hatchway, when run away with by their mettled steeds, or the inimitable absurdities of the Feast of the Ancients, without a good hearty burst of honest laughter, must

[1] ["The strong picture of the discomforts of his naval life, which he afterwards drew, is said to have attracted considerable attention to the internal economy of our ships of war, and to have occasioned the commencement of some salutary reformations."—Campbell.]

be well qualified to look sad and gentlemanlike with Lord Chesterfield and Master Stephen.

Upon the whole, the genius of Smollett may be said to resemble that of Rubens. His pictures are often deficient in grace; sometimes coarse, and even vulgar in conception; deficient in keeping, and in the due subordination of parts to each other; and intimating too much carelessness on the part of the artist. But these faults are redeemed by such richness and brilliancy of colours; such a profusion of imagination—now bodying forth the grand and terrible—now the natural, the easy, and the ludicrous; there is so much of life, action, and bustle, in every group he has painted; so much force and individuality of character—that we readily grant to Smollett an equal rank with his great rival Fielding, while we place both far above any of their successors in the same line of fictitious composition.

ABBOTSFORD, 1*st June*, 1821.

APPENDIX

No. I.

LETTER FROM TOBIAS SMOLLETT TO THE HON. ALEXANDER HUME CAMPBELL

THIS Letter exists in a rough draught, sent by the author to his friend Mr. MacKercher. The consequences are not known, but the letter appeared in the *European Magazine*, vol. v., from Smollett's handwriting.

"I have waited several days in hope of receiving from you an acknowledgment touching those harsh, unjustifiable (and, let me add), unmannerly expressions, which you annexed to my name, in the Court of King's Bench, when you opened the cause depending between me and Peter Gordon; and, as I do not find that you have discovered the least inclination to retract what you said to my prejudice, I have taken this method to refresh your memory, and to demand such satisfaction as a gentleman, injured as I am, has a right to claim.

"The business of a counsellor is, I apprehend, to investigate the truth in behalf of his client; but surely he has no privilege to blacken and asperse the character of the other party, without any regard to veracity or decorum. That you assumed this unwarrantable privilege in commenting upon your brief, I believe you will not pretend to deny, when I remind you of those peculiar flowers of

elocution which you poured forth on that notable occasion. First of all, in order to inspire the court with horror and contempt for the defendant, you gave the jury to understand that you did not know this Dr. Smollett; and, indeed, his character appeared in such a light, from the facts contained in your brief, that you never should desire to know him. I should be glad to learn of what consequence it could be to the cause whether you did or did not know the defendant, or whether you had or had not an inclination to be acquainted with him? Sir, this was a pitiful personality, calculated to depreciate the character of a gentleman to whom you was a stranger, merely to gratify the rancour and malice of an abandoned fellow who had feed you to speak in his cause. Did I ever seek your acquaintance, or court your protection? I had been informed, indeed, that you was a lawyer of some reputation, and, when the suit commenced, would have retained you for that reason, had I not been anticipated by the plaintiff; but, far from coveting your acquaintance, I never dreamed of exchanging a word with you on that or any other subject: you might therefore have spared your invidious declaration, until I had put it in your power to mortify me with a repulse, which, upon my honour, would never have been the case, were you a much greater man than you really are. Yet this was not the only expedient you used to prepossess the jury against me. You was hardy enough to represent me as a person devoid of all humanity and remorse; as a barbarous ruffian, who, in a cowardly manner, had, with two associates as barbarous as myself, called a peaceable gentleman out of his lodgings, and assaulted him in the dark, with an intent to murder. Such an horrid imputation, publicly fixed upon a person whose innocence you could hardly miss to know, is an outrage, for which, I believe, I might find reparation from the law itself, notwithstanding your artful manner of qualifying the expression by saying, *provided the facts can be proved.* This low subterfuge may, for aught I know, screen you from a prosecution at law, but can never acquit you in that court which every man of honour holds in his own breast. I say, you must have known my innocence from the weakness of the evidence which you produced, and with which you either was, or ought to have been previously acquainted, as well as from my general character, and that of my antagonist, which it was your duty to have learned. I will venture to say, you did know my character, and in your heart believed me incapable of such brutality as you laid to my charge. Surely I do not overrate my own importance in affirming, that I am not so obscure in life as to have escaped the notice of Mr. Hume Campbell; and I will be bold enough to challenge him and the whole world to prove one instance in which my integrity was called, or at least left, in question. Have not I, therefore, reason to suppose that, in spite of your internal conviction, you undertook the cause of a wretch, whose ingratitude, villany, and rancour, are, I firmly believe, without example in this kingdom; that you magnified a slight correction bestowed by his benefactor, in consequence of the most insolent provocation, into a deliberate and malicious scheme of assassination; and endeavoured, with all the virulence of defamation, to destroy the character, and

even the life, of an injured person, who, as well as yourself, is a gentleman by birth, education, and profession? In favour of whom, and in consequence of what, was all this zeal manifested, all this slander exhausted, and all this scurrility discharged? Your client, whom you dignified with the title of Esquire, and endeavoured to raise to the same footing with one in point of station and character, you knew to be an abject miscreant, whom my compassion and humanity had lifted from the most deplorable scenes of distress; whom I had saved from imprisonment and ruin; whom I had clothed and fed for a series of years; whom I had occasionally assisted with my purse, credit, and influence. You knew, or ought to have known, that, after having received a thousand marks of my benevolence, and prevailed upon me to indorse notes for the support of his credit, he withdrew himself into the verge of the court, and took up his habitation in a paltry alehouse, where he not only set me and the rest of his creditors at defiance, but provoked me by scurrilous and insolent letters and messages, to chastise him in such a manner as gave him a handle for this prosecution, in which you signalised yourself as his champion for a very honourable consideration. There is something so palpably ungrateful, perfidious, and indeed diabolical, in the conduct of the prosecutor, that, even in these degenerate days, I wonder how he could find an attorney to appear in his behalf. *O tempora! O mores!* After having thus sounded the trumpet of obloquy in your preamble, and tortured ever circumstance of the plaintiff's evidence to my detriment and dishonour, you attempted to subject me to the ridicule of the Court, by asking a question of my first witness, which had no more relation to the cause, than if you had desired to know the name of his grandmother. What title had you to ask of a tradesman, if he knew me to be an author? What affinity had this question with the circumstances of the assault? Was not this foreign to the purpose? Was it not impertinent, and proposed with a view to put me out of countenance, and to raise the laugh of the spectators at my expense? There, indeed, you was disappointed, as you frequently are in those little digressive efforts by which you make yourself remarkable. Though I do not pretend to possess that superlative degree of effrontery by which some people make a figure at the bar, I have assurance enough to stand the mention of my works without blushing, especially when I despise the taste, and scorn the principles, of him who would turn them to my disgrace. You succeeded, however, in one particular; I mean, in raising the indignation of my witness; of which you took all imaginable advantage, puzzling, perplexing, and brow-beating him with such artifice, eagerness, and insult, as overwhelmed him with confusion, and had wellnigh deprived me of the benefit of his evidence. Luckily for me, the next gentleman who was called confirmed what the other had swore, and proved to the satisfaction of the judge and jury, and even to your own conviction, that this terrible deliberate assassination was no more than a simple blow given to a rascal after repeated provocation, and that of the most flagrant kind; that no advantage was taken in point of weapons; and that two drabs, whom they had picked up for the purpose, had

affirmed upon oath a downright falsehood, with a view to blast my reputation. You yourself was so conscious of this palpable detection, that you endeavoured to excuse them by a forced explanation, which, you may depend upon it, shall not screen them from a prosecution for perjury. I will not say, that this was like patronising a couple of gipsies who had forsworn themselves, consequently forfeited all title to the countenance, or indeed forbearance of the Court; but this I will say, that your tenderness for them was of a piece with your whole behaviour to me, which I think was equally insolent and unjust; for, granting that you had really supposed me guilty of an intended assassination before the trial began, you saw me in the course of evidence acquitted of that suspicion, and heard the judge insist upon my innocence in his charge to the jury, who brought in their verdict accordingly. Then, sir, you ought in common justice to have owned yourself mistaken, or to have taken some other opportunity of expressing your concern for what you had said to my disadvantage; though even such an acknowledgment would not have been a sufficient reparation, because, before my witnesses were called, many persons left the court with impressions to my prejudice, conceived from the calumnies which they heard you espouse and encourage. On the whole, you opened the trial with such hyperbolical impetuosity, and conducted it with such particular bitterness and rancour, that everybody perceived you was more than ordinarily interested; and I could not divine the mysterious bond of union that attached you to Peter Gordon, Esq., until you furnished me with a key to the whole secret, by that strong emphasis with which you pronounced the words — *Ferdinand Count Fathom*. Then I discovered the source of your good-will towards me, which is no other than the history of a lawsuit inserted in that performance, where the author takes occasion to observe, that the counsel behaved like men of consummate abilities in their profession; exerting themselves with equal industry, eloquence, and erudition, in their endeavours to perplex the truth, brow-beat the evidence, puzzle the judge, and mislead the jury. Did any part of this character come home to your own conscience? or did you resent it as a sarcasm levelled at the whole bench without distinction? I take it for granted, that this must have been the origin of your enmity to me; because I can recollect no other circumstance in my conduct, by which I could incur the displeasure of a man whom I scarce knew by sight, and with whom I never had the least dispute, or indeed concern. If this was the case, you pay a very scurvy compliment to your own integrity, by fathering a character which is not applicable to any honest man, and give the world a handle to believe, that our courts of justice stand greatly in need of reformation. Indeed, the petulance, licence, and buffoonery of some lawyers in the exercise of their function, is a reproach upon decency, and a scandal to the nation; and it is surprising that the Judge, who represents his Majesty's person, should suffer such insults upon the dignity of the place. But whatever liberties of this kind are granted to counsel, no sort of freedom, it seems, must be allowed to the evidence, who, by the by, are of much more consequence to the cause. You will take

upon you to divert the audience at the expense of a witness, by impertinent allusions to some parts of his private character and affairs; but if he pretends to retort the joke, you insult, abuse, and bellow against him, as an impudent fellow, who fails in his respect to the Court. It was in this manner you behaved to my first witness, whom you first provoked into a passion by your injurious insinuations; then you took an advantage of the confusion which you had entailed upon him; and, lastly, you insulted him, as a person who had shuffled in his evidence. This might have been an irreparable injury to the character of a tradesman, had not he been luckily known to the whole jury, and many other persons in Court, as a man of unquestionable probity and credit. Sir, a witness has as good a title as you have to the protection of the Court; and ought to have more, because evidence is absolutely necessary for the investigation of truth; whereas, the aim of a lawyer is often to involve it in doubt and obscurity. Is it for this purpose you so frequently deviate from the point, and endeavour to raise the mirth of the audience with flat jokes and insipid similes? or have you really so miserably mistaken your own talents, as to set up for the character of a man of humour? For my own part, were I disposed to be merry, I should never desire a more pregnant subject of ridicule, than your own appearance and behaviour; but as I am at present in a very serious mood, I shall content myself with demanding adequate reparation for the injurious treatment I have received at your hands; otherwise, I will in four days put this letter in the press, and you shall hear in another manner—not from a ruffian and an assassin—but from an injured gentleman, who is not ashamed of subscribing himself," etc.

No. II.

CONTROVERSY WITH SHEBBEARE AND GRAINGER

[Among others, he incurred at this time the resentment of Dr. Shebbeare, a well-known political and miscellaneous writer, who had been chastised in the *Review*, for his insolent and seditious publications; and severely punished by the government for his arrogance and abuse, in stigmatising some great names with all the virulence of censure, and even assailing the throne itself, with oblique insinuation and ironical satire. The incensed author suspected Smollett, and retaliated in a pamphlet, entitled *The Occasional Critic, or the Decrees of the Scots Tribunal in the Critical Review rejudged*, 8vo, 1757, written with all the presumption of Dennis without his learning, with all his rage without his integrity.

Although the " Occasional Critic " in many instances stumbled on the truth, the whole animation of the performance arose from the vivacity and virulence with which the enraged writer maintained that the authors of the *Critical Review* were Scots scrubs, and rascals, barbers, tailors, apothecaries, and surgeons' mates, who understood neither Greek, Latin, French, nor English, nor any other language; and that Scotland never produced any one man of genius, learning, or integrity.

The acrimony of Dr. Shebbeare's retaliation was greater than Smollett's patience, which was not his most shining virtue, could bear, without resistance or reply; and it immediately drew from him, or one of his literary associates, the following observations:

" Whatever regard we may have for our fellow-subjects in North Britain, and surely we do regard them, not only as our brethren, but also as a people distinguished by their learning and capacity, we have no call to enter the lists as their champions, against an antagonist whom they themselves would hardly deign to oppose.

" We cannot help, however, taking this opportunity of declaring, that of five persons concerned in writing the *Critical Review*, one only is a native of Scotland; so that our hypercritic's national rancour against that kingdom seems to have mistaken its object; unless he levelled the whole at one member of our society, whom indeed he has reviled, bespattered, and belied with all the venom of low, invidious malice, and all the filth of vulgar abuse. These attacks, however, we forgive, as the natural effects of resentment. That person has occasionally checked and chastised him, as an ignorant and presumptuous quack in politics, an enemy to his king and country, and a desperate incendiary, who, by misrepresenting facts, and aspersing characters, endeavoured to raise a ferment in the nation, at a time when a concurrence of unfortunate incidents had produced a spirit of discontent among the people."—*Critical Review*, 1757.

He had no sooner repelled the illiberal abuse of a writer, whose injustice he reprobated, and whose resentment he despised, than he was thrown into a more vexatious, and less creditable dispute with Dr. Grainger, a man of genius, and a poet, who suspected him to be the writer of the article in the *Critical Review*, in which his " Translation of Tibullus " had been treated with unjustifiable severity. Whether Dr. Grainger's suspicions were well or ill founded, he thought his translation had been criticised in the *Review* with malignity, and published an angry " Letter to Tobias Smollett, M.D., occasioned by his Criticism upon a late Translation of Tibullus," 8vo, 1758; in which, after refuting the criticisms of the reviewer, he proves, by examples principally taken from the article on his own work, that the authors of the *Critical Review* had broken, in every particular, their promises solemnly made to the public, in the plan of their journal: mentions Smollett in contemptuous terms, and indulges himself in some ludicrous reflections on the unlucky diminutive of his Christian name.

These personal reflections and pleasantries, which mingled in the controversy between the poet and the critic, who mutually respected each other's talents and character, were not forgotten when Dr. Grainger's " Letter " fell under the animadversions of Smollett, or one of his associates, in the *Critical Review*, who, in ridiculing that playful species of vengeance, was guilty of injustice, if he meant to insinuate that his antagonist could be classed among the dunces of the age.

The writer of the article observes, that " Dr. Grainger had found in Dr. Smollett's Christian name *Tobias*, and its diminutive *Toby*, a very extraordinary fund of humour and ridicule; but that this

species of wit, however entertaining, was not new, for that others had played on the cognomen with as much dexterity as he had on the prenomen; that *Smollett* had been facetiously converted, by that stupendous genius Dr. Hill, into *Small-head* and *Small-wit*; that the same happy thought had struck the dunces of a former age, who had not only punned successfully on the name of *Alexander Pope*, but had even written a poem against him, entitled *Sawney*. "Think not, reader," he adds, "that we presume to compare Dr. Smollett, as a writer, with Mr. Pope; we are sensible of the infinite disparity; but in one respect their fate is similar; they have both been abused, belied, and accused of ignorance, malice, and want of genius, by the confessed dunces of the age, at a time when their works were read and approved, at least as much as any other English contemporary author."

Men of letters, it has often been remarked, are more easily provoked, and more vindictive when provoked, than other men. Their quarrels, when they are enraged, are commonly more violent, and better known, than the ordinary competitions of interest in which other men indulge themselves; as they originate in the jealousy of their own fame, or in the envy of that of their brethren, and are circulated in the popular vehicles of wit and satire. The controversy between Smollett and Dr. Grainger, it is probable, did not originate in envy, with which the mind of Smollett was not tainted, nor in any personal animosity against his amiable and ingenious countryman, but in a systematic opposition to the authors of the *Monthly Review*, in which Dr. Grainger was known to be concerned, who had an interest in decrying the qualifications of his colleagues, and of impeaching the decrees of the tribunal in which he presided.

Of the unjust suspicions which his concern in the *Critical Review* excited in the breasts of Mr. Home, the author of the tragedy of *Douglas*, Dr. Wilkie, author of *The Epigoniad*, and some other writers of his own country, whose talents and characters he respected, he complains in a letter to Dr. Moore, in the year 1758, in which is the following paragraph:—

"I have for some time done very little in the *Critical Review*. The remarks upon Home's tragedy I never saw until they were in print; and yet I have not read one line of the *Epigoniad*. I am told the work has merit; and I am truly sorry that it should have been so roughly handled. Notwithstanding the censures that have been so freely bestowed upon these and other productions of our country, the authors of the *Critical Review* have been insulted and abused as a *Scots Tribunal*."

Besides these, many other disputes arose with different writers, who considered themselves injured by the severity of his criticisms. Seldom a month passed without some complaints of his injustice and inhumanity towards bad writers, or their employers, and those not often expressed in the most decent terms. The public, to whom they appealed, refused their sympathy, and retorted the charge, with disgrace, on his accusers; who, being authors without talents, were themselves impostors, who defrauded the public, and had little reason to expect his indulgence. But whatever reason he had

to complain of the personal abuse he suffered from detected dulness and mortified vanity, he afterwards found, that the revenge of an author was nothing compared to the rancour of the politician, and the resentment of little men placed in great stations.—Anderson's *Life of Smollett*, pp. 57, 62.]

RICHARD CUMBERLAND

This author, distinguished in the eighteenth century, survived till the present was considerably advanced, interesting to the public, as well as to private society, not only on account of his own claims to distinction, but as the last of that constellation of genius which the predominating spirit of Johnson had assembled about him, and in which he presided a stern Aristarchus. Cumberland's character and writings are associated with those of Goldsmith, of Burke, of Percy, of Reynolds, names which sound in our ears as those of English classics. He was his own biographer; and from his Memoirs we are enabled to trace a brief sketch of his life and labours, as also of his temper and character;[1] on which latter subject we have the evidence of contemporaries, and perhaps some recollections of our own.

Richard Cumberland boasted himself, with honest pride, the descendant of parents respectable for their station, eminent in learning, and no less for worth and piety. The celebrated Richard Bentley was his maternal grandfather, a name dreaded as well as respected in literature, and which his descendant, on several occasions, protected with filial respect against those who continued over his grave the insults which he had received from the wits of Queen Anne's reign. This eminent scholar had one son, the well-known author of *The Wishes*, and two daughters. The second, Joanna, the Phœbe of Byron's pastoral, married Denison Cumberland, son of an archdeacon, and grandson of Richard Cumberland, Bishop of Peterborough.[2] Though

[1] ["*Memoirs of Richard Cumberland*, written by himself, containing an Account of his Life and Writings, interspersed with Anecdotes and Characters of several of the most distinguished persons of his time, with whom he has had intercourse and connection. London: 1806, 4to.; 1807, 2 vols. 8vo."]

[2] The following amiable picture of Richard Cumberland occurs in the lately published and very interesting Memoirs of Samuel Pepys:—

"18*th March*, 1667.—Comes my old friend Mr. Richard Cumberland to see me, being newly come to town, whom I have not seen almost, if not quite, these seven years. In a plain country parson's dress. I could not

possessed of some independence, he became Rector of Stanwick, at the instance of his father-in-law, Dr. Bentley, and, in course of time, Bishop of Clonfert, and was afterwards translated to the see of Kilmore.

Richard Cumberland, the subject of this memoir, was the second child of this marriage, the eldest being Joanna, a daughter. He was born on the 19th of February, 1732; and, as he naturally delights to record with precision, in an apartment called the Judge's Chamber, of the Master's Lodge of Trinity College, then occupied by his celebrated maternal grandfather—*inter sylvas Academi*. With equal minuteness the grandson of the learned Bentley goes through the course of his earlier studies, and registers his progress under Kinsman of St. Edmondsbury, afterwards at Westminster, and finally at Cambridge; in all which seminaries of classical erudition, he highly distinguished himself. At college he endangered his health by the severity with which he followed his studies, obtained his bachelor's degree with honour, and passed with triumph a peculiarly difficult examination; the result of which was his being elected to a Fellowship.

Amid his classical pursuits, the cultivation of English letters was not neglected, and Cumberland became the author of many poems of considerable merit. It may be observed, however, that he seldom seems to have struck out an original path for himself, but rather wrote because others had written successfully, and in the manner of which they had set an example, than from the strong impulse of that inward fire, which makes or forces a way for its own coruscations, without respect to the course of others. Thus Cumberland wrote an Elegy in a Church-

spend much time with him, but prayed him to come with his brother, who was with him, to dine with me to-day; which he did do: and I had a great deal of his good company; and a most excellent person he is as any I know, and one that I am sorry should be lost and buried in a little country town, and would be glad to remove him thence; and the truth is, if he would accept of my sister's fortune, I should give £100 more with him than to a man able to settle her four times as much as I fear he is able to do."

It is impossible to suppress a smile at the manner in which the candid journalist describes the brother-in-law whom he finally adopted, not without a glance of regret towards Cumberland:—

"*February 7th*, 1667-8.—Met my cosen Roger again, and Mr. Jackson, who is a plain young man, handsome enough for her, one of no education nor discourse, but of few words, and one altogether that, I think, will please me well enough. My cosen had got me to give the odd sixth £100 presently, which I intended to keep to the birth of the first child: and let it go—I shall be eased of the care. So there parted, my mind pretty well satisfied with this plain fellow for my sister; though I shall, I see, have no pleasure nor content in him, as if he had been a man of reading and parts, like Cumberland."—Pepys' *Diary*, vol. ii., pp. 29, and 189.

yard on Saint Mark's Eve, because Gray had, with general applause, published an Elegy in a Country Churchyard. He composed a drama on the subject of Elfrida, and with a chorus, in imitation of Mason; he imitated Hammond, and he imitated Spenser, and seems to display a mind full of information and activity, abounding with the natural desire of distinction, but which had not yet attained sufficient confidence in its own resources to attempt a road to eminence of his own discovery; and this is a defect from which none of his compositions are perhaps entirely free.

Mr. Cumberland's original destiny was to have walked the respectable and retired path by which his ancestors had ascended to church dignity; and there is every reason to believe that, as he was their equal in worth and learning, his success in life might have been the same as theirs. But a temptation, difficult to be resisted, turned him from the study of divinity to that of politics.

The Rev. Mr. Cumberland, father of the poet, had it in his power to render some important political services to the Marquis of Halifax, then distinguished as a public character; and in recompense or acknowledgment of this, young Richard was withdrawn from the groves of Cam, and the tranquil pursuit of a learned profession, to attend the noble lord in the advantageous and confidential situation of private secretary. Amidst much circumlocution and moral reflection, which Cumberland bestows on this promotion and change of pursuit, the reader may fairly infer that, though he discharged with regularity the ostensible duties of his office, it was not suited to him; nor did he give the full satisfaction which perhaps he might have done, had a raw academician, his head full, as he says, of Greek and Latin, and little acquainted with the affairs of the existing world, been in the first place introduced for a time to busy life as a spectator, ere called to take an active part in it as a duty. His situation, however, led him into the best society, and ensured liberal favour and patronage (so far as praise and recommendation went) to the efforts of his muse. In particular, his connection with Lord Halifax introduced our author to Bubb Doddington, afterwards Lord Melcombe, of Diary memory, who affected the character of Mecænas, and was in reality an accomplished man.

It was under the joint auspices of Lords Halifax and Melcombe, that Cumberland executed what he has entitled his first legitimate drama, *The Banishment of Cicero*—an unhappy subject, the deficiencies of which are not redeemed by much powerful writing. This tragedy was recommended to Garrick by the two

noble patrons of Cumberland; but, in despite of his deference for great names and high authorities, the manager would not venture on so unpromising a subject of representation. *The Banishment of Cicero* was published by the author, who frankly admits that in doing so he printed Garrick's vindication.

About this time, as an earnest of future favours, Cumberland obtained, through the influence of Lord Halifax, the office of crown-agent for the province of Nova Scotia, and conceived his fortune sufficiently advanced in the world to settle himself by marriage. In 1759, therefore, he united himself to Elizabeth, only daughter of George Ridge, of Kilmerton, by Miss Brooke, a niece of Cumberland's grandfather, Bentley. Mrs. Cumberland was accomplished and beautiful, and the path of promotion appeared to brighten before the happy bridegroom.

Lord Bute's star was now rising fast in the political horizon, and both the Marquis of Halifax and the versatile Bubb Doddington had determined to worship the influence of this short-lived luminary. The latter obtained a British peerage, a barren honour, which only entitled him to walk in the procession at the coronation, and the former had the Lieutenancy of Ireland. The celebrated Single-Speech Hamilton held the post of Chief Secretary to the Lord-lieutenant, while Cumberland, not to his perfect content, was obliged to confine himself to the secondary department of Ulster Secretary. There was wisdom, perhaps, in the selection, though it would have been unreasonable to expect the disappointed private secretary to concur in that opinion. No one ever doubted the acute political and practical talents of William Gerard Hamilton, while Cumberland possessed, perhaps, too much of the poetical temperament to rival him as a man of business. A vivid imagination, eager on its own schemes, and unapt to be stirred by matter of duller import; a sanguine temper, to which hopes too often seem as certainties, joined to a certain portion both of self-opinion and self-will, although they are delightful, considered as the attributes of an intimate friend, are inconvenient ingredients in the character of a dependent, whose duty lies in the paths of ordinary business. Besides, Mr. D'Israeli has produced the following curious evidence, to show that Cumberland's habits were not those which fit a man for ordinary affairs: "A friend who was in office with the late Mr. Cumberland, assures me that he was so intractable to the forms of business, and so easily induced to do more or to do less than he ought, that he was compelled to perform the official business of this literary man, to free himself from his annoyance;

and yet Cumberland could not be reproached with any deficiency in a knowledge of the human character, which he was always touching with a caustic pleasantry." [1]

Cumberland, however, rendered his principal some effectual service, even in the most worldly application of the phrase—he discovered a number of lapsed patents, the renewal of which the Lord-lieutenant found a convenient fund of influence; but the Ulster Secretary had no other reward than the empty offer of a baronetcy, which he wisely declined. He was gratified, however, though less directly, by the promotion of his father to the see of Clonfert in Ireland. The new prelate shifted his residence to that kingdom, where, during his subsequent life, his son, with pious duty, spent some considerable part of every year in attendance on his declining age.

Lord Halifax, on his return to England, obtained the seals of Secretary of State, and Cumberland, a candidate for the office of Under Secretary, received the cold answer from his patron, that "he was not fit for every situation;" a reason scarce rendered more palatable by the special addition, that he did not possess the necessary fluency in the French tongue. Sedgewick, the successful competitor, vacated a situation at the Board of Trade, called Clerk of Reports, and Cumberland became desirous to hold it in his room. As this was in the gift of Lord Hillsborough, the proposal to apply for it was in a manner withdrawing from the patronage of Lord Halifax, who seems to have considered it as such, and there ensued some coldness betwixt the minister and his late private secretary. On looking at these events, we can see that Cumberland was probably no good man of business, as it is called, certainly no good courtier; for, holding such a confidential situation with Lord Halifax, he must otherwise have rendered himself either too useful, or too agreeable, to be easily parted with.

An attempt of Cumberland's to fill up the poetical part of an English opera, incurred the jealousy of Bickerstaff, the author of *Love in a Village*, then in possession of that department of dramatic composition. The piece, called the *Summer's Tale*, succeeded in such a degree, as induced the rival writer to vent his indignation in every species of abuse against the author and the drama. In a much better spirit, Cumberland ascribed Bickerstaff's hostility to an anxious apprehension for his interest, and generously intimated his intention to interfere no farther with him as a writer of operas. The dispute led to important

[1] *The Literary Character Illustrated*, 1822, vol. ii., p. 106.

consequences; for Smith, well known by the deserved appellation of Gentleman Smith, then of Covent Garden, turned the author's dramatic genius into a better channel, by strongly recommending to him to attempt the legitimate drama. By this encouragement, Mr. Cumberland was induced to commence his dramatic career, which he often pursued with success, and almost always with such indefatigable industry, as has no parallel in our theatrical history.

The Brothers was the first fruit of this ample harvest. It was received with applause, and is still on the stock-list of acting plays. The sudden assumption of spirit by Sir Benjamin Dove, like Luke's change from servility to insolence, is one of those incidents which always tell well upon the spectator. The author acknowledges his obligations to Fletcher's *Little French Lawyer;* but the comedy is brought to bear on a point so different that little is in this instance detracted from its merit.

But the *West Indian*, which succeeded in the following year, raised its author much higher in the class of dramatic writers of the period, and—had Sheridan not been—must have placed Cumberland decidedly at the head of the list. It is a classical comedy; the dialogue spirited and elegant; the characters well conceived, and presenting bold features, though still within the line of probability; and the plot regularly conducted, and happily extricated. The character of Major O'Flaherty, those who have seen it represented by Jack Johnstone [1] will always consider as one of the most efficient in the British drama. It could only have been drawn by one who, like Cumberland, had enjoyed repeated opportunities of forming a true estimate of the Irish gentleman; and the Austrian cockade in his hat might serve to remind the British administration that they had sacrificed the services of this noble and martial race to unjust restrictions and political prejudices. The character of Major O'Flaherty may have had the additional merit of suggesting

[1] Commonly called Irish Johnstone. The judgment displayed by this excellent actor, in his by-play, as it is called, was peculiarly exquisite. When he intercepts the cordial designed for Lady Rusport, and which her attendant asserts was only good for ladies' complaints, the quiet and sly expression of surprise, admirably subdued by good-breeding, and by the respect of a man of gallantry even to the foibles of the fair sex, and the dry mode in which he pronounced that the potion was very "good for some gentlemen's complaints too," intimate at once the quality of her ladyship's composing draught, but in a manner accurately consistent with the perfect politeness of the discoverer, enjoying the jest himself, yet anxious to avoid the most distant appearance of insulting or ridiculing the lady's frailty. Go thy ways, old Jack! we shall hardly see thy like in thy range of character.

that of Sir Lucius O'Trigger; but the latter is a companion, not a copy, of Cumberland's portrait.

Garrick, reconciled with the author by a happy touch of praise in the prologue to *The Brothers*, contributed an epilogue, and Tom King supported the character of Belcour with that elastic energy, which gave reality to all the freaks of a child of the sun, whose benevolence seems as instinctive as his passions.

The *Fashionable Lover*, which followed the *West Indian*, was an addition to Cumberland's reputation. There was the same elegance of dialogue, but much less of the *vis comica*. The scenes hang heavy on the stage, and the character of Colin M'Leod, the honest Scotch servant, not being drawn from nature, has little, excepting tameness, to distinguish it from the Gibbies and Sawnies which had hitherto possession of the stage, as the popular representatives of the Scottish nation. The author himself is, doubtless, of a different opinion, and labours hard to place his *Fashionable Lovers* by the side of the *West Indian*, in point of merit; but the critic cannot avoid assenting to the judgment of the audience. The *Choleric Man* [1] was next acted, and was well received, though now forgotten; and other dramatic sketches, of minor importance, were given by Cumberland to the public, before the production of his *Battle of Hastings*, a tragedy, in which the language, often uncommonly striking, has more merit than the characters or the plot. The latter has the inconvenient fault of being inconsistent with history, which at once affords a hold to every critic of the most ordinary degree of information. It was successful, however, Henderson performing the principal character. Bickerstaff being off the stage, our author also wrote *Calypso*, and another opera, with the view of serving a meritorious young composer, named Butler.

Neither did these dramatic labours entirely occupy Cumberland's time. He found leisure to defend the memory of his grandfather, Bentley, in a controversy with Lowth, and to plead the cause of the unhappy Daniel Perreau, over whose fate hangs a veil so mysterious.[2] Cumberland drew up his address to the jury, an elegant and affecting piece of composition, which had

[1] ["Cumberland is so distressed with abuse about his play, that he has solicited Goldsmith to *take him off the rack of the newspapers*." Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.—"The play in question was the *Choleric Man*, which Cumberland afterwards published with a *Dedication to Detraction*. He was very sensitive to such attacks, as Sheridan more than hints in the character of Sir Fretful Plagiary."—Croker, vol. ii., p. 197.]

[2] [Robert and Daniel Perreau, twin brothers, were executed in January, 1776, for the alleged forgery of a bond.]

much effect on the audience in general, though it failed in moving those who had the fate of the accused in their hands.

The satisfaction which the author must have derived from the success of his various dramatic labours, seems to have been embittered by the criticisms to which, whether just or invidious, all authors, but especially those who write for the theatre, are exposed. He acknowledges that he gave too much attention to the calumnies and abuse of the public press, and tells us, that Garrick used to call him the man without a skin. Unquestionably, toughness of hide is necessary on such occasions; but, on the whole, it will be found that they who give but slight attention to such poisoned arrows, experience least pain from their venom.

There was, indeed, in Cumberland's situation, enough to console him for greater mortifications than malevolent criticism ought to have had power to inflict. He was happy in his family, consisting of four sons and two daughters. All the former entered the king's service; the first and third as soldiers, the second and fourth in the navy. Besides these domestic blessings, Cumberland stood in the first ranks of literature, and, as a matter of course, in the first rank in society, to which, in England, successful literature is a ready passport. His habits and manners qualified him for enjoying this distinguished situation, and his fortune, including the profits of his office, and his literary revenues, seems not to have been inadequate to his maintaining his ground in society. It was shortly after improved by Lord George Germain, afterwards Lord Sackville, who promoted him in the handsomest manner to the situation of Secretary to the Board of Trade, at which he had hitherto held a subordinate situation.

A distant relation also, Decimus Reynolds, constituted Mr. Cumberland heir to a considerable property, and placed his will in the hands of his intended successor, in order that he might not be tempted to alter it at a future period. Cumberland was too honourably minded to accept of it, otherwise than as a deposit to be called back at the testator's pleasure. After the course of several years, Mr. Reynolds resumed it accordingly. Another remarkable disappointment had in the meanwhile befallen, which, while it closed his farther progress in political life, gave a blow to his private fortune which it never seems to have recovered, and, in the author's own words, " very strongly contrasted and changed the complexion of his latter days from that of the preceding ones."

In the year 1780, hopes were entertained of detaching Spain from the hostile confederacy by which Britain was all but over-

whelmed. That kingdom could not but dread the example held out by the North Americans to their own colonies. It was supposed possible to open a negotiation with the minister, Florida Blanca, and Richard Cumberland was the agent privately intrusted with conducting this political intrigue. He was to proceed in a frigate to Lisbon, under pretence of a voyage for health or pleasure; and either to go on to Madrid, or to return to Britain, as he should be advised, after communicating with the Abbé Hussey, chaplain to his Catholic Majesty, the secret agent in this important affair. Mrs. Cumberland and her daughters accompanied him on this expedition. On the voyage, the envoy had an opportunity, precious to an author and dramatist, of seeing British courage displayed on its own proper element, by an action betwixt the *Milford* and a French frigate, in which the latter was captured. He celebrated this action in a very spirited sea-song, which we remember popular some years afterwards.

There was one point of the utmost consequence in the proposed treaty, a point which always has been so in negotiations with Spain, and which will again become so whenever she shall regain her place in the European republic. This point respects Gibraltar. There is little doubt that the temptation of recovering this important fortress was the bait which drew the Spanish nation into the American war; and could this fortress have been ceded to its natural possessor, mere regard to the Family Compact would not have opposed any insurmountable obstacle to a separate peace with England. But the hearts of the English people were as unalterably fixed on retaining this badge of conquest, as those of the Spaniards upon regaining it; and in truth its surrender must have been generally regarded at home and abroad as a dereliction of national honour, and a confession of national weakness. Mr. Cumberland was therefore instructed not to proceed to Madrid, until he should learn from the Abbé Hussey whether the cession of this important fortress was, or was not, to be made, on the part of Spain, the basis of the proposed negotiation. In the former event, the secret envoy of England was not to advance to Madrid; but, on the contrary, to return to Britain. It was to ascertain this point that Hussey went to Madrid; but unhappily his letters to Cumberland, who remained at Lisbon, while they encouraged him to try the event of a negotiation, being desirous perhaps, on his own account, that the negotiations should not be broken off, gave him no assurances whatever upon the point by which his motions were

to be regulated. Walpole, the British minister at Lisbon, seems to have seen through the Abbé's duplicity, and advised Cumberland to conform implicitly to his instructions, and either return home, or at least not leave Lisbon without fresh orders from England. Unluckily, Mr. Cumberland had adopted the idea that delay would be fatal to the success of the treaty, and, sanguine respecting the peaceful dispositions of the Spanish ministry, and confident in the integrity of Hussey, he resolved to proceed to Madrid upon his own responsibility—a temerity against which the event ought to warn all political agents.

The following paragraph of a letter to Lord Hillsborough shows Mr. Cumberland's sense of the risk which he thought it his duty to incur:—

"I am sensible I have taken a step which exposes me to censure upon failure of success, unless the reasons on which I have acted be weighed with candour, and even with indulgence. In the decision I have taken for entering Spain, I have had no other object but to keep alive a treaty to which any backwardness or evasion on my part would, I am persuaded, be immediate extinction. I know where my danger lies; but as my endeavours for the public service, and the honour of your administration, are sincere, I have no doubt that I shall obtain your protection."

From this quotation, to which others might be added, it is evident that, even in Cumberland's own eyes, nothing but his success could entirely vindicate him from the charge of officious temerity; and the events which were in the meantime occurring in London removed this chance to an incalculable distance. When he arrived at Madrid, he found Florida Blanca in full possession of the whole history of the mob termed Lord George Gordon's, and, like foreigners on all such occasions, bent to perceive in the explosion of a popular tumult the downfall of the British monarch and ministry.[1] A negotiation, of a delicate nature at any rate, and opened under such auspices, could hardly be expected to prosper, although Mr. Cumberland did his best to keep it alive. Under a reluctant permission of the British ministry, rather extorted than granted, the envoy resided about twelve months in Madrid, trying earnestly to knit the bonds of amity between ministers, who seem to have had little serious hope or intention of pacification, until at length Cumberland's return was commanded in express terms, on the 18th January,

[1] *Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 18.

1781. The point upon which his negotiation finally shipwrecked was that very article to which his instructions from the beginning had especially directed him, the cession of Gibraltar. According to Cumberland, the Spaniards only wanted to talk on this subject; and if he had been permitted to have given accommodation in a matter of mere punctilio, the object of a separate treaty might have been accomplished. To this sanguine statement we can give no credit. Spain was at the very moment employed in actively combining the whole strength of her kingdom for the recovery of this fortress, with which she naturally esteemed her national honour peculiarly connected. She was bribed by the promise of the most active and powerful assistance from France; and it is very improbable that her ministry would have sacrificed the high hopes which they entertained of carrying this important place by force of arms, in exchange for anything short of its specific surrender.

Still, however, as Mr. Cumberland acted with the most perfect good faith, and with a zeal, the fault of which was only its excess, the reader can scarce be prepared, by our account of his errors, for the unworthy treatment to which he was subjected. Our author affirms, and we must presume with perfect accuracy, that when he set out upon this mission, besides receiving a thousand pounds in hand, he had assurance from the Secretary of the Treasury, that all bills drawn by Mr. Cumberland on his own bank, should be instantly replaced from the treasury; and he states that, notwithstanding this positive pledge, accompanied by the naming a very large sum as placed at his discretion, no one penny was ever so replaced by government; and that he was obliged to repay from his private fortune, to a ruinous extent, the bankers who had advanced money on his private credit; for which, by no species of appeal or application, was he ever able to obtain reimbursement.

Whatever may be thought of Mr. Cumberland's political prudence in venturing beyond his commission, or of his sanguine disposition, which too long continued to hope a favourable issue to a desperate negotiation, there can be no doubt that he was suffered to remain at Madrid, in the character of a British agent, recognised as such by the ministry, in constant correspondence with the Secretary of State, and receiving from him directions respecting his residence at, or departure from Madrid. There seems, therefore, to have been neither humanity nor justice in refusing the payment of his drafts, and subjecting him to such wants and difficulties that, after having declined the liberal

offer of the Spanish monarch to defray his expenses, the British agent was only extricated from the situation of a penniless bankrupt by the compassion of a private friend, who advanced him a seasonable loan of five hundred pounds. The state of the balance due to him was indeed considerable, being no less than four thousand five hundred pounds; and it may be thought, that, as Mr. Cumberland's situation was ostensibly that of a private gentleman, travelling for health, much expense could not—at least ought not—to have attended his establishment. But his wife and daughters were in family with him; and we must allow for domestic comfort, and even some sort of splendour, in an individual who was to hold communication with the principal servants of the Spanish crown. Besides, he had been promised an ample allowance for secret-service money, out of a sum placed at his own discretion. The truth seems to be that Lord North's administration thought a thousand pounds was enough to have lost on an unsuccessful negotiation; and as Cumberland had certainly made himself in some degree responsible for the event, the same ministers, who, doubtless, would have had no objection to avow the issue of his intrigues had they been successful, chose, in the contrary event, to disown them.

To encounter the unexpected losses to which he was thus subjected, Mr. Cumberland was under the necessity of parting with his paternal property at an unfavourable season, and when its value could not be obtained. Shortly after followed the dissolution of the Board of Trade; and the situation of secretary fell under Burke's economical pruning-knife—a compensation amounting only to one-half the value being appointed to the holder. Thus unpleasingly relieved from official and political duties, Mr. Cumberland adopted the prudent resolution of relinquishing his town residence, and settling himself and his family at Tunbridge, where he continued to live in retirement, yet not without the exercise of an elegant hospitality, till the final close of his long life.

The *Anecdotes of Eminent Painters in Spain*, in two volumes, together with a Catalogue of the Pictures which adorn the Escurial, suffered to be made by the King of Spain's express permission, were the principal fruits of our author's visit to the continent. Yet we ought to except the very pretty story of Nicolas Pedrosa, an excellent imitation of Le Sage, which appeared in the *Observer*, a periodical paper, which Cumberland edited with considerable success. This was one of the literary enterprises in which the author, from his acquaintance with

men and manners, as well as his taste and learning, was well qualified to excel, and the work continues to afford amusement both to the general reader and the scholar. The latter is deeply interested in the curious and classical account which the *Observer* contains of the early Greek drama. In this department, Cumberland has acknowledged his debts to the celebrated Bentley, his grandfather, and to his less known, but scarce less ingenious relation, Richard Bentley, son of the celebrated scholar, and author of the comedy or farce termed *The Wishes*. The aid of the former was derived from the notes which Cumberland possessed, but that of Richard Bentley was more direct.

This learned and ingenious, but rather eccentric person, was the friend of Horace Walpole, who, as his nephew Cumberland complains with some justice, exercised the rights of patronage rather unmercifully. He had been unsuccessful as a dramatic author. His comic piece entitled *The Wishes* was written with a view of ridiculing the ancient drama of Greece, particularly in their pedantic adherence to the unities. This was a purpose which could scarcely be understood by a vulgar audience, for much of it turned on the absurd structure of the stage of Athens, and the peculiar stoicism with which the Chorus, supposed to be spectators of the scene, deduce moral lessons of the justice of the gods from the atrocities which the action exhibits, but without stirring a finger to interfere or to prevent them. In ridicule of this absurdity, the Chorus in *The Wishes* are informed that a madman has just broken his way into the cellars, with a torch in his hand, to set fire to a magazine of gunpowder; on which, instead of using any means of prevention or escape, they began, in strophe and antistrophe, to lament their own condition, and exclaim against the thrice-unhappy madman—or rather the thrice-unhappy friends of the madman, who had not taken measures of securing him—or rather upon the six-times unhappy fate of themselves, thus exposed to the madman's fury. All this is a good jest to those who remember the stoicism with which the Choruses of Æschylus and Euripides view and comment upon the horrors which they witness on the stage, but it might have been esteemed caviare to the British audience in general; yet the entertainment was well received until the extravagant incident of hanging Harlequin on the stage. The author was so sensible of the absurdity of this exhibition, that he whispered to his nephew, Cumberland, during the representation—"If they do not damn this, they deserve to be d—d themselves;" and,

as he spoke, the condemnation of the piece was complete. It is much to be wished that this singular performance were given to the public in print. The notice of Richard Bentley has led us something from our purpose, which only called on us to remark that he furnished Cumberland with those splendid translations from the Greek dramatists which adorn *The Observer*. The author, however, claims for himself the praise due to a version of the Clouds of Aristophanes, afterwards incorporated with this periodical work.

The modern characters introduced by Cumberland in his *Observer* were his own; and that of the benevolent Israelite, Abraham Abrahams, was, he informs us, written upon principle, in behalf of a persecuted race. He followed up this generous intention in a popular comedy, entitled *The Jew*. The dramatic character of Sheva, combining the extremes of habitual parsimony and native philanthropy, was written in the same spirit of benevolence as that of Abrahams, and was excellently performed by Jack Bannister. The public prints gave the Jews credit for acknowledging their gratitude in a very substantial form. The author, in his Memoirs, does not disguise his wish that they had flattered him with some token of the debt which he conceives them to have owed. We think, however, that a prior token of regard should have been bestowed on the author of *Joshua*, in the tale of *Count Fathom;* and, moreover, we cannot be surprised that the people in question felt a portrait in which they were rendered ludicrous as well as interesting to be something between an affront and a compliment. Few of the better class of the Jewish persuasion would, we believe, be disposed to admit either Abrahams or Sheva as fitting representatives of their tribe.

In his retreat at Tunbridge, labouring in the bosom of his family, and making their common sitting-room his place of study, Cumberland continued to compose a number of dramatic pieces, of which he himself seems almost to have forgotten the names, and of which a modern reader can trace very few. We have subjoined, however, a list of them, with his other works, taken from the Index of his Memoirs. Several were successful; several unfortunate; many never performed at all; but the spirit of the author continued unwearied and undismayed. *The Arab, The Walloons*, and many other plays, are forgotten; but the character of Penruddock, in the *Wheel of Fortune*, well conceived in itself, and admirably supported by Kemble,[1] and

[1] ["Mr. Kemble took great pains," says Mr. Boaden, "with the character

since by Charles Young, continues to command attention and applause. *The Carmelite*, a tragedy, on the regular tragic plan, attracted much attention, as the inimitable Siddons played the part of the Lady of St. Valois, and Kemble that of Montgomeri. The plot, however, had that fault which, after all, clings to many of Cumberland's pieces—there was a want of originality. The spectator, or reader, was by the story irresistibly reminded of *Douglas*, and there was more taste than genius in the dialogue. The language was better than the sentiments; but the grace of the one could not always disguise that the other wanted novelty. *The Brothers*, *The West Indian*, and *The Wheel of Fortune*, stand high in the list of acting plays, and we are assured, by a very competent judge, that *First Love*, which we have not ourselves lately seen, is an excellent comedy, and maintains possession of the stage. The drama must have been Cumberland's favourite style of composition, for he went on, shooting shaft after shaft at the mark which he did not always hit, and often effacing by failures the memory of triumphant successes. His plays at last amounted to upwards of fifty, and intercession and flattery were sometimes necessary to force their way to the stage. On these occasions the Greenroom traditions avow that the veteran bard did not hesitate to bestow the most copious praises on the company who were to bring forward a new piece, at the expense of their rivals of the other house, who had his tribute of commendation in their turn, when their acceptance of a play put them in his good graces. It was also said that when many of the dramatic authors united in a complaint to the Lord Chancellor against the late Mr. Sheridan, then manager of Drury Lane, he prevented Cumberland from joining the confederacy, by offering to bring out any manuscript play which he should select for performance. But selection was not an easy task to an author,

of Penruddock in the *Wheel of Fortune*. It came at length upon the stage, on the 28th of February (1795), one of the most perfect impersonations that had ever excited human sympathy. He had fashioned every sentence of the part to his own organs, so that it seemed a decided reality; and his personal manner was so little disturbed, that the spectator, by an easy delusion, almost fancied that Mr. Kemble was relating some striking misfortunes that had happened, in early life, to himself. I most seriously affirm that, for *identity*, Penruddock would hardly admit of competition. Here, from the great intimacy between us, he advised with me as to the plain and almost quaker attire he wore; and I saw in his walk, and occasionally in his countenance, the image of that noble wreck of *treachery* and *love*, which was shortly to command the tears of a whole people. He had a habit, by intense meditation, of working himself into a character which he considered important, and calculated to diversify the usual range of his performances. Penruddock merited his pains."—*Memoirs of Kemble*, vol. ii., p. 140.]

to whom all the offspring of his genius were equally dear. After much nervous hesitation, he trusted the chance to fortune; and out of a dozen of manuscript plays which lay by him, is said to have reached the manager the first which came to hand, without reading the title. Yet if Cumberland had the fondness of an author for his own productions, it must be owned he had also the fortitude to submit, without murmuring, to the decision of the public. "I have had my full share of success, and I trust I have paid my tax for it," he says, good-humouredly, "always without mutiny, and very generally without murmuring. I have never irritated the town by making a sturdy stand against their opposition, when they have been pleased to point it against any one of my productions. I never failed to withdraw myself on the very first intimation that I was unwelcome; and the only offence that I have been guilty of, is, that I have not always thought the worse of a composition only because the public did not think well of it." [1]

The Sacred Muse shared with her dramatic sisters in Cumberland's worship. In his poem of *Calvary*, he treated of a subject which, notwithstanding Klopstock's success, may be termed too lofty and too awful to be the subject of verse. He also wrote, in a literary partnership with Sir James Bland Burgess (well known as the author of *Richard Cœur de Lion*, and other compositions), *The Exodiad*, an epic poem, founded on sacred history. By *Calvary* the author sustained the inconvenient loss of a hundred pounds, and *The Exodiad* did not prove generally successful.

The author also undertook the task of compiling his own Memoirs; and the well-known Mr. Richard Sharp,[2] equally

[1] *Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 269. [We presume this play was *The Jew of Mogadore*, acted in 1808. It was set to music by Michael Kelly, who, in his *Reminiscences*, gives the following account of the reception of the piece by the management of Drury Lane. We quote the passage as highly to Mr. Sheridan's honour:—"It was with great reluctance that the Board of Management at Drury Lane accepted it; therefore, when I had finished the music of the first act, I rested upon my oars, until I knew their final determination. I met Mr. Sheridan one day in Essex Street in the Strand, and told him of it. He desired me to go on with it by all means, 'For,' said he, 'if the opera should fail, you will fall with a fine classical scholar, and elegant writer, as well as a sound dramatist' (such was his expression of opinion of Cumberland's abilities). 'Go instantly,' continued he, 'to those discerning critics, who call themselves the "Board of Management," and tell them from me, if you please, that they are all asses, to presume to sit in judgment on the writings of such a man as Cumberland; and say, further, that *I order* the opera to be accepted, and put into rehearsal.'—'And pray, sir,' said I, 'in what light am I to view this Board of Management? What are they?'—'Pegs to hang hats upon,' said Sheridan."]

[2] Author of *Letters and Essays in Prose and Verse*. London: 12mo, 1834.

beloved for his virtues, and admired for the extent of his information, and the grace with which he communicates it, by encouraging Mr. Cumberland to become his own biographer, has performed a most acceptable service to the public. It is indeed one of the author's most pleasing works, and conveys a very accurate idea of his talents, feelings, and character, with many powerful sketches of the age which has passed away. It is impossible to read, without deep interest, Cumberland's account of the theatre in Goodman's Fields, where Garrick, in the flower of his youth, and all the energy of genius, bounded on the stage as Lothario, and pointed out to ridicule the wittol husband and the heavy-paced Horatio; while in the last character, Mr. Quin, contrasting the old with the modern dramatic manner, surly and solemn, in a dark-green coat, profusely embroidered, an enormous periwig, rolled stockings, and high-heeled, square-toed shoes, mouthed out his heroics in a deep, full, unvaried tone of declamation, accompanied by a kind of sawing action, which had more of the senate than the stage. Several characters of distinguished individuals are also drawn in the Memoirs with much force; particularly those of Doddington, Lord Halifax, Lord Sackville, George Selwyn, and others of the past age. There are some traits of satire and ridicule which are perhaps a little overcharged. This work was to have remained in manuscript until the author's death, when certainly such a publication appears with a better grace than while the autobiographer still treads the stage. But Mr. Cumberland, notwithstanding his indefatigable labours, had never been in easy circumstances since his unlucky negotiation in Spain; and in the work itself, he makes the affecting confession that circumstances, paramount to prudence and propriety, urged him to anticipate the date of publication. The Memoirs were bought by Lackington's house for £500, and passed speedily from a quarto to an octavo shape.

We have yet to mention another undertaking of this unwearied author, at a period of life advanced beyond the ordinary date of humanity. The *Edinburgh Review* was now in possession of a full tide of popularity, and the *Quarterly Review* was just commenced, or about to commence, under powerful auspices, when Mr. Cumberland undertook the conduct of a critical work, which he entitled *The London Review*, on an entirely new plan, inasmuch as each article was to be published with the author's name annexed. He was supported by assistants of very considerable talents; but, after two or three numbers, the scheme

became abortive. In fact, though the plan contained an appearance of more boldness and fairness than the ordinary scheme of anonymous criticism, yet it involved certain inconveniences, which its author did not foresee.[1] It is true, no one seriously believes that, because the imposing personal plural *We* is adopted in a critical article, the reader is from that circumstance to infer that the various pieces in a periodical review are subjected to the revisal of a board of literary judges, and that each criticism is sanctioned by their general suffrage, and bears the stamp of their joint wisdom. Still, however, the use of the first person plural is so far legitimate that, in every well-governed publication of the kind, the articles, by whomsoever written, are at least revised by the competent person selected as editor, which affords a better warrant to the public for candour and caution, than if each were to rest on the separate responsibility of the individual writer. It is even more important to remark that the anonymous character of periodical criticism has a tendency to give freedom to literary discussion, and at the same time, to soften the animosities to which it might otherwise give rise; and, in that respect, the peculiar language which members of the senate hold towards each other, and which is for that reason called parliamentary, resembles the ordinary style of critical discussion. An author, who is severely criticised in a review, can hardly be entitled, in the ordinary case, to take notice of it otherwise than as a literary question; whereas a direct and immediate collision, with a particular individual, seems to tend either, on the one hand, to limit the freedom of criticism, by placing it under the regulation of a timid complaisance, or, on the other, to render it (which is, to say the least, needless) of a fiercer and more personal cast, and thereby endanger the decorum, and perhaps the peace of society. Besides this, there will always be a greater authority ascribed by the generality of readers to the oracular opinion issued from the cloudy sanctuary of an invisible body, than to the mere *dictum* of a man with a Christian name and surname, which may not sound much better than those of the author over whom he

[1] [" The *London Review*, set up in 1809, under Mr. Cumberland's editorial care, did not outlive many numbers. He spoke great things in the prospectus about the distinguishing feature of the journal, viz. its having the writer's name affixed to the articles. This plan has succeeded pretty well both in France and Germany, but has failed utterly, as often as it has been tried, in this country. It is needless, however, to go into any speculation on the principle *here;* for the *London Review*, whether sent into the world with or without names, must soon have died of the original disease of dulness."—Byron's *Works*, vol. ix., p. 62, *note*.]

predominates. In the far-famed Secret Tribunal of Germany, it was the invisibility of the judges which gave them all their awful jurisdiction.

So numerous were Cumberland's publications, that, having hurried through the greater part of them, we have yet to mention his novels, though it is as a writer of fictitious history he is here introduced. They were three in number, *Arundel*, *Henry*, and *John de Lancaster*. The two first were deservedly well received by the public; the last was a labour of old age, and was less fortunate. It would be altogether unfair to dwell upon it, as forming a part of those productions on which the author's literary reputation must permanently rest.

Arundel, the first of these novels, was hastily written during the residence of a few weeks at Brighthelmstone, and sent to the press by detached parcels. It showed at the first glance what is seldom to be found in novels, the certainty that the author had been well acquainted with schools, with courts, and with fashionable life, and knew the topics on which he was employing his pen. The style, also, was easy and clear, and the characters boldly and firmly sketched. Cumberland, in describing Arundel's feelings at exchanging his college society, and the pursuits of learning, to become secretary to the Earl of G., unquestionably remembered the alteration of his own destination in early life. But there is no reason to think that in the darker shades of the Earl of G. he had any intention to satirise his patron, the Earl of Halifax, whom he paints in his Memoirs in much more agreeable colours.

The success which this work obtained, without labour, induced the author to write *Henry*, on which he bestowed his utmost attention. He formed it upon Fielding's model, and employed two years in polishing and correcting the style. Perhaps it does not, after all, claim such great precedence over *Arundel* as the labour of the author induced him to expect. Yet it would be unjust to deny to *Henry* the praise of an excellent novel. There is much beauty of description, and considerable display of acquaintance with English life in the lower ranks; indeed, Cumberland's clowns, sketched from his favourite men of Kent, amongst whom he spent his life, may be placed by the side of similar portraits by the first masters.

Above all, the character of Ezekiel Daw, though the outline must have been suggested by that of Abraham Adams, is so well distinguished by original and spirited conception that it may pass for an excellent original. The Methodists, as they

abhor the lighter arts of literature, and perhaps contemn those which are more serious, have, as might have been expected, met much rough usage at the hands of novelists and dramatic authors, who generally represent them either as idiots or hypocrites. A very different feeling is due to many, perhaps to most, of this enthusiastic sect; nor is it rashly to be inferred that he who makes religion the general object of his life is for that sole reason to be held either a fool or an impostor. The professions of strict piety are inconsistent with open vice, and therefore must, in the general case, lead men to avoid the secret practice of what, openly known, must be attended with loss of character; and thus the Methodists, and other rigid sectaries, oppose to temptation the strong barriers of interest and habitual restraint, in addition to those restrictions which religion and morality impose on all men. The touch of enthusiasm connected with Methodism renders it a species of devotion, warmly affecting the feelings, and therefore peculiarly calculated to operate upon the millions of ignorant poor, whose understandings the most learned divines would in vain address by mere force of argument; and, doubtless, many such simple enthusiasts as Ezekiel Daw, by their well-meant and indefatigable exertions amongst the stubborn and ignorant, have been the instruments of Providence to call such men from a state of degrading and brutal profligacy, to a life more worthy of rational beings, and of the name of Christians. Thus thinking, we are of opinion that the character of Ezekiel Daw, which shows the Methodist preacher in his strength and in his weakness, bold and fervent when in discharge of his mission, simple, well-meaning, and even absurd, in the ordinary affairs of life, is not only an exquisite, but a just portrait.

Cumberland seems to have been less happy in some of the incidents of low life which he has introduced. He forced, as we have some reason to suspect, his own elegance of ideas into an imitation of Fielding's scenes of this nature; and, as bashful men sometimes turn impudent in labouring to be easy, our ingenious author has occasionally, in his descriptions of Zachary Cawdle and his spouse, become disgusting, when he meant to be humorous.

The author of *Henry* piqued himself particularly on the conduct of the story, but we confess ourselves unable to discover much sufficient reason. His skein is neither more artfully perplexed, nor more happily disentangled, than in many tales of the same kind; there is the usual, perhaps we should call it

the necessary, degree of improbability, for which the reader must make the usual and necessary allowance, and little can be said in this respect, either to praise or censure the author. But there is one series of incidents, connected with a train of sentiment rather peculiar to Cumberland, which may be traced through several of his dramas, which appears in *Arundel*, and which makes a principal part of the interest in *Henry*. He had a peculiar taste in love affairs, which induced him to reverse the usual and natural practice of courtship, and to throw upon the softer sex the task of wooing, which is more gracefully, as well as naturally, the province of the man. In *Henry*, he has carried this farther, and endowed his hero with all the self-denial of the Hebrew patriarch, when he has placed him within the influence of a seductive being, much more fascinating in her address, than the frail Egyptian matron. In this point, Cumberland either did not copy his master, Fielding, at all, or, what cannot be conceived of an author so acute, he mistook for serious that author's ironical account of the continence of Joseph Andrews. We do not desire to bestow many words on this topic; but we are afraid, such is the universal inaccuracy of moral feeling in this age, that a more judicious author would not have striven against the stream, by holding up his hero as an example of what is likely to create more ridicule than imitation.

It might be also justly urged against the author that the situations in which Henry is placed with Susan May exceed the decent licence permitted to modern writers; and certainly they do so. But Cumberland himself entertained a different opinion, and concludes with this apology: "If, in my zeal to exhibit virtue triumphant over the most tempting allurements, I have painted those allurements in too vivid colours, I am sorry, and ask pardon of all those who think the moral did not heal the mischief."

Another peculiarity of our author's plots is, that an affair of honour, a duel either designed or actually fought, forms an ordinary part of them. This may be expected in fictitious history as a frequent incident, since the remains of the Gothic customs survive in that particular only, and since the indulgence which it yields to the angry passions gives an opportunity, valuable to the novelist, of stepping beyond the limits prescribed by the ordinary rules of society, and introducing scenes of violence, without incurring the charge of improbability. But Cumberland himself had something of a chivalrous disposition.

His mind was nurtured in sentiments of honour, and in the necessity of maintaining reputation with the hazard of life; in which he resembled another dramatic poet, the celebrated author of *Douglas*, who was also an enthusiast on the point of honour. In private life, Cumberland has proved his courage; and in his Memoirs he mentions, with some complacency, his having extorted from a "rough and boisterous captain of the sea" an apology for some expressions reflecting on his friend and patron, Lord Sackville. In his Memoirs, he dwells with pleasure on the attachment shown to him by two companies of volunteers, raised in the town of Tunbridge, and attaches considerable importance to the commission of commandant, with which their choice had invested him. They presented their commander with a sword, and, when their pay was withdrawn, offered to continue their service, gratuitously, under him.

The long and active literary life of this amiable man and ingenious author was concluded on the 7th May, 1811, in his eightieth year, at the house of Mr. Henry Fry, in Bedford Place, Russel Square, and he was interred in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey.

His literary executors were Mr. Richard Sharp, already mentioned, Mr. Rogers, the distinguished author of *The Pleasures of Memory*, and Sir James Bland Burgess; but we have seen none of his posthumous works, except *Retrospection*, a poem in blank verse, which appeared in 1812, and which seems to have been wrought up out of the ideas which had suggested themselves while he was engaged in writing his Memoirs.

Mr. Cumberland had the misfortune to outlive his lady and several of his family. His surviving offspring were Charles, who, we believe, held high rank in the army, and William, a post-captain in the navy. His eldest daughter, Elizabeth, married Lord Edward Bentinck, son of the Duke of Portland; his second, Sophia, was less happily wedded to William Badcock, Esq., who died in the prime of life, and left a family of four grandchildren, whom Chancery awarded to the care of Mr. Cumberland. His third surviving daughter was Frances Marianne, born during his unlucky embassy to Spain. To her the author affectionately inscribed his Memoirs, "as having found, in her filial affection, all the comforts that the best of friends could give, and derived, from her talents and understanding, all the enjoyments that the most pleasing of companions could communicate."

In youth, Mr. Cumberland must have been handsome; in

age, he possessed a pleasing external appearance, and the polite ease of a gentleman accustomed to the best company. In society, he was eloquent, well-informed, and full of anecdote; a willing dealer in the commerce of praise, or—for he took no great pains to ascertain its sincerity—we should rather say, of flattery. His conversation often showed the author in his strong and in his weak points. The foibles are well known which Sheridan embodied on the stage, in the character of Sir Fretful Plagiary. But it is not from a caricature that a just picture can be drawn, and in the little pettish sub-acidity of temper which Cumberland sometimes exhibited, there was more of humorous sadness than of ill-will, either to his critics or his contemporaries. He certainly, like most poets, was little disposed to yield to the assaults of the former, and often, like a gallant commander, drew all his forces together, to defend the point which was least tenable. He was a veteran also, the last living representative of the literature of his own age, and conceived himself the surviving depositary of their fame, obliged to lay lance in rest against all which was inconsistent with the rules which they had laid down or observed. In these characters it cannot be denied that, while he was stoutly combating for the cause of legitimate comedy and the regular novel, Cumberland manifested something of personal feeling in his zeal against those contemporaries who had found new roads, or by-paths, as he thought them, to fame and popularity, and forestalled such as were scrupulously treading the beaten highway, without turning to the right or to the left. These imperfections, arising, perhaps, from natural temper, from a sense of unmerited neglect, and the pressure of disadvantageous circumstances of fortune, or from the keen spirit of rivalry proper to men of an ardent disposition, rendered irritable by the eagerness of a contest for public applause, are the foibles rather of the profession than the individual; and though the man of letters might have been more happy had he been able entirely to subdue them, they detract nothing from the character of the man of worth, the scholar, and the gentleman.[1]

[1] [" Here Cumberland lies, having acted his parts,
The Terence of England, the mender of hearts;
A flattering painter, who made it his care
To draw men as they ought to be, not as they are.
His gallants are all faultless, his women divine,
And Comedy wonders at being so fine;
Like a tragedy queen he has dizen'd her out,
Or rather, like tragedy giving a rout.
His fools have their follies, so lost in a crowd

We believe Cumberland's character to have been justly, as well as affectionately, summed up in the sermon preached on occasion of his funeral, by his venerable friend, Dr. Vincent, then Dean of Westminster. "The person you now see deposited is Richard Cumberland, an author of no small merit; his writings were chiefly for the stage, but of strict moral tendency—they were not without their faults, but these were not of a gross description. He wrote as much as any, and few wrote better; and his works will be held in the highest estimation, so long as the English language is understood. He considered the theatre as a school for moral improvement, and his remains are truly worthy of mingling with the illustrious dead which surround us. In his subjects on Divinity, you find the true Christian spirit; and may God, in his mercy, assign him the true Christian reward!"

CATALOGUE OF CUMBERLAND'S WORKS

FROM THE

INDEX TO HIS MEMOIRS

Epic.

Calvary.
Exodiad.

Dramatic.

Arab.
Banishment of Cicero.
Battle of Hastings.
Brutus the Elder.
Box-Lobby Challenge.
Brothers.
Choleric Man.
Country Attorney.
Calypso.
Caractacus.
Carmelite.
Clouds, from the Greek of Aristophanes.
Dependant.
Days of Geri.
Don Pedro.
Eccentric Lover.
Fashionable Lover.
False Demetrius.
False Impressions.
First Love.
Hint to Husbands.
Impostor.
Jew.
Joanna of Montfaucon: a Dramatic Romance.
Last of the Family.
Mysterious Husband.
Natural Son.
Note of Hand.
Sailor's Daughter.
Shakspeare in the Shades.
Timon of Athens.
Torrendal.
Walloons.
Wat Tyler.
West Indian.
Wheel of Fortune.

Of virtues and feelings, that Folly grows proud,
And coxcombs, alike in their failings alone,
Adopting his portraits are pleased with their own:
Say, where has our poet this malady caught,
Or, wherefore his characters thus without fault?
Say, was it that mainly directing his view
To find out men's virtues, and finding them few,
Quite sick of pursuing each troublesome elf,
He grew lazy at last, and drew from himself?"—GOLDSMITH.

Widow of Delphi.
Word for Nature.

Fugitive Pieces.

Affectation.
Lines to Princess Amelia.
Avarice.
Dreams.
Envy.
Epilogue to the Arab.
Fragment.
Hamlet.
Hammond.
Humility.
Judges.
Verses to Dr. James.
Verses to Lord Mansfield.
Verses on Nelson's Death.
Ode to the Sun.
Lines addressed to Pitt.
Lines on Pride.
Lines on Prudery.
Lines to the Prince of Wales.
Lines to Romney the Painter.
Elegy on St. Mark's Eve.
Translations from the Troades.
Translations from Virgil.

Prose Publications.

Curtius Redeemed from the Gulf.
Evidences of the Christian Revelation.
Controversy with Lowth on the Subject of Dr. Bentley.

Miscellaneous.

Anecdotes of Eminent Painters in Spain.
Catalogue of Paintings in the King of Spain's Palace.
Sermons.
Periodical Papers in the *Observer*.
Translation of the Psalms.
Memoirs.

Novels.

Arundel.
Henry.
John de Lancaster.

To this formidable list there remain yet to be added the critical papers written by the author for the *London Review; Retrospection*, a poem, in blank verse, on the author's own past life; and perhaps other publications, unknown to the editor.

ABBOTSFORD, *December*, 1824.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Our biographical notices of distinguished novelists were in some degree proportioned to the space which their labours occupy in the collection for which these sketches were originally written. On that principle, the present subject, so interesting in every other point of view, could not be permitted long to detain us. The circumstances also of Dr. Goldsmith's life, his early struggles with poverty and distress, the success of his brief and brilliant career after he had become distinguished as an author, are so well known, and have been so well and so often told, that a short outline is all that ought here to be attempted.[1]

Oliver Goldsmith was born on the 29th November, 1728, at Pallas (or rather Palice), in the parish of Farney, and county of Longford, in Ireland, where his father, the Rev. Charles Goldsmith, a minister of the Church of England, at that time resided. This worthy clergyman, whose virtues his celebrated son afterwards rendered immortal, in the character of the Village Preacher,[2] had a family of seven children, for whom he was enabled to provide but very indifferently. He obtained ultimately a benefice in the county of Roscommon, but died early; for the careful researches of the Rev. John Graham of Lifford have found his widow *nigra veste senescens*, residing with her son Oliver in Ballymahon, so early as 1740. Among the shop accounts of a petty grocer of the place, Mrs. Goldsmith's name occurs frequently as a customer for trifling articles; on which occasions Master Noll appears to have been his mother's usual emissary. He was recollected, however, in the neighbourhood, by more poetical employments, as that of playing on the flute, and wandering in solitude on the shores, or among the islands of the river Inny, which is remarkably beautiful at Ballymahon.

Oliver early distinguished himself by the display of lively talents, as well as by that uncertainty of humour which is so often attached to genius, as the slave in the chariot of the Roman triumph. An uncle by affinity, the Rev. Thomas Contarine,

[1] [It is understood that Mr. Prior, the author of the *Life of Burke*, has prepared for the press *Memoirs of Goldsmith*, on a very extensive scale, and enriched with many new and important details, and original documents. 1834.]

[2] [See the *Deserted Village*.]

undertook the expense of affording to so promising a youth the advantages of a scholastic education.[1] He was put to school at Edgeworths-town, and, in June 1744, was sent to Dublin College as a sizer; a situation which subjected him to much discouragement and ill usage, especially as he had the misfortune to fall under the charge of a brutal tutor.[2]

On 15th June, 1747, Goldsmith obtained his only academical laurel, being an exhibition on the foundation of Erasmus Smythe, Esq. Some indiscreet frolic induced him soon afterwards to quit the university for a period; and he appears thus early to have commenced that sort of idle strolling life, which has often great charms for youths of genius, because it frees them from every species of subjection, and leaves them full masters of their own time, and their own thoughts; a liberty which they do not feel too dearly bought, at the expense of fatigue, of hunger, and of all the other inconveniences incidental to those who travel without money. Those who can recollect journeys of this kind, with all the shifts, necessities, and petty adventures, which attend them, will not wonder at the attractions which

[1] [" This benevolent man," says Mr. Campbell, " was descended from the noble family of the Contarini of Venice. His ancestor, having married a nun in his native country, was obliged to fly with her into France, where she died of the small-pox. Being pursued by ecclesiastical censures, Contarini came to England; but the puritanical manners, which then prevailed, having afforded him but a cold reception, he was on his way to Ireland, when, at Chester, he met with a young lady, of the name of Chaloner, whom he married. Having afterwards conformed to the Established Church, he, through the interest of his wife's family, obtained ecclesiastical preferment in the diocese of Elphin. Their lineal descendant was the benefactor of Goldsmith."—*Specimens*, vol. vi., p. 252.]

[2] [" Though he occasionally distinguished himself by his translations from the classics, his general appearance at the University corresponded neither with the former promises nor future development of his talents. He was, like Johnson, a lounger at the college-gate. He gained neither premiums nor a scholarship, and was not admitted to the degree of bachelor of arts till two years after the regular time. His backwardness, it would appear, was the effect of despair rather than of wilful negligence. He had been placed under a savage tutor, named Theaker Wilder, who used to insult him at public examinations, and to treat his delinquencies with a ferocity that broke his spirit. On one occasion, poor Oliver was so imprudent as to invite a company of young people, of both sexes, to a dance and supper in his rooms. On receiving intelligence of which, Theaker grimly repaired to the place of revelry, belaboured him before his guests, and rudely broke up the assembly. The disgrace of this inhuman treatment drove him for a time from the university. He set out from Dublin, intending to sail from Cork for some other country, he knew not whither; but after wandering about till he was reduced to such famine, that he thought a handful of grey peas, which a girl gave him at a wake, the sweetest repast he had ever tasted, he returned home, like the prodigal son, and matters were adjusted for his being received again at college."—Campbell.]

they had for such a youth as Goldsmith.[1] Notwithstanding these erratic expeditions, he was admitted Bachelor of Arts in 1749.

Goldsmith's persevering friend, Mr. Contarine, seems to have recommended the direction of his nephew's studies to medicine, and in the year 1752 he was settled at Edinburgh to pursue that science. Of his residence in Scotland, Goldsmith retained no favourable recollections. He was thoughtless, and he was cheated; he was poor, and he was nearly starved. Yet, in a very lively letter from Edinburgh, addressed to Robert Brianton of Ballymahon, he closes a sarcastic description of the country and its inhabitants, with the good-humoured candour which made so distinguished a part of his character. "An ugly and a poor man is society only for himself, and such society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance. Fortune has given you circumstances, and Nature a power to look charming in the eyes of the fair. Nor do I envy my dear Bob such blessings, while I

[1] ["About the time of his finally leaving the university, his father died. His uncle Contarine, from whom he experienced the kindness of a father, wished him to have taken orders, and Oliver is said to have applied for them, but to have been rejected; though for what reason is not sufficiently known. He then accepted the situation of private tutor in a gentleman's family, and retained it long enough to save about £30, with which he bought a tolerable horse, and went forth upon his adventures. At the end of six weeks, his friends having heard nothing of him, concluded that he had left the kingdom, when he returned to his mother's house without a penny, upon a little horse, which he called Fiddleback, and which was not worth more than twenty shillings. The account which he gave of himself was, that he had been at Cork, where he had sold his former horse, and paid his passage to America; but the ship happening to sail whilst he was viewing the curiosities of the city, he had just money enough left to purchase Fiddleback, and to reach the house of an old acquaintance on the road. This nominal friend, however, had received him very coldly, and in order to evade his application for pecuniary relief, had advised him to sell his diminutive steed, and promised him another in its place, which would cost him nothing either for price or provender. To confirm this promise, he pulled out an oaken staff from beneath a bed. Just as this generous offer had been made, a neighbouring gentleman came in, and invited both the miser and Goldsmith to dine with him. Upon a short acquaintance, Oliver communicated his situation to the stranger, and was enabled by his liberality to proceed on his journey. This was his story. His mother, it may be supposed, was looking rather gravely upon her prudent child, who had such adventures to relate, when he concluded them by saying, 'And now, my dear mother, having struggled so hard to come home to you, I wonder that you are not more rejoiced to see me.'—Mr. Contarine next resolved to send him to the Temple; but, on his way to London he was fleeced of all his money in gaming, and returned once more to his mother's house in disgrace and affliction. Again was his good uncle reconciled to him, and equipped him for Edinburgh, that he might pursue the study of medicine."—Campbell.]

may sit down and laugh at the world and at myself, the most ridiculous object in it." [1]

From Edinburgh our student passed to Leyden, but not without the diversities of an arrest for debt, a captivity of seven days at Newcastle, from having been found in company with some Scotchmen in the French service, and the no less unpleasing variety of a storm.[2] At Leyden, Goldsmith was peculiarly exposed to a temptation which he never at any period of his life could easily resist. The opportunities of gambling were frequent—he seldom declined them, and was at length stripped of every shilling.

In this hopeless condition Goldsmith commenced his travels, with one shirt in his pocket, and a devout reliance on Providence. It is understood that, in the narrative of George, eldest son of the Vicar of Wakefield, the author has given a sketch of the resources which enabled him, on foot and without money, to make the tour of Europe. Through Germany and Flanders he had recourse to his violin, in which he was tolerably skilled; and a lively tune usually procured him a lodging in some peasant's cottage for the evening. In Italy, where his musical skill was held in less esteem, he found hospitality by disputing at the monasteries, in the character of a travelling scholar, upon certain philosophical theses, which the learned inhabitants were obliged, by their foundation, to uphold against all impugners. Thus, he obtained, sometimes money, sometimes lodgings. He must have had other resources to procure both, which he has not thought proper to intimate. The foreign universities afford similar facilities to poor scholars, with those presented by the monasteries. Goldsmith resided at Padua for several months, and is said to have taken a degree at Louvain. Thus far is

[1] ["On his arrival at Edinburgh," says Mr. Campbell, "he took lodgings, and sallied forth to take a view of the city; but, at a late hour, he recollected that he had omitted to inform himself of the name and address of his landlady; and would not have found his way back, if he had not fortunately met the porter who had carried his luggage."]

[2] [Mr. Campbell continues, "If Leyden, however, was his object, he, with the usual eccentricity of his motions, set out to reach it, by way of Bourdeaux, and embarked in a ship which was bound thither from Leith; but was driven, by stress of weather, into Newcastle-upon-Tyne. His fellow passengers were some Scotchmen, who had been employed in raising men in their own country for the service of the King of France. They were arrested, by orders from government, at Newcastle; and Goldsmith, who had been committed to prison with them, was not liberated till after a fortnight's confinement. By this accident, however, he was eventually saved from an early death. The vessel sailed during his imprisonment, and was wrecked at the mouth of the Garonne, where every soul on board perished."—*Specimens, etc.*, vol. vi., p. 255.]

certain, that an account of the tour made by so good a judge of human nature, in circumstances so singular, would have made one of the most entertaining books in the world; and it is both wonder and pity that Goldsmith did not hit upon a publication of his travels, amongst the other literary resources in which his mind was fertile. He was not ignorant of the advantages which his mode of travelling had opened to him. "Countries," he says, in his *Essay on Polite Literature in Europe*, "wear very different appearances to travellers of different circumstances. A man who is whirled through Europe in his postchaise, and the pilgrim who walks the great tour on foot, will form very different conclusions. *Haud inexpertus loquor*." Perhaps he grew ashamed of the last admission, which he afterwards omitted. Goldsmith spent about twelve months in these wanderings, and landed in England in the year 1746, after having perambulated France, Italy, and part of Germany.

Poverty was now before our author in all its bitterness. His Irish friends had long renounced or forgotten him; and the wretched post of usher to an academy, of which he has drawn so piteous a picture in George's account of himself, was his refuge from actual starving. Unquestionably, his description was founded on personal recollections, where he says, "I was up early and late; I was brow-beat by the master; hated for my ugly face by the mistress; worried by the boys within; and never permitted to stir out, to seek civility abroad." This state of slavery he underwent at Peckham Academy, and had such bitter recollection thereof as to be offended at the slightest allusion to it. An acquaintance happening to use the proverbial phrase, "Oh, that is all a holiday at Peckham," Goldsmith reddened, and asked if he meant to affront him. From this miserable condition he escaped with difficulty to that of journeyman, or rather shop-porter, to a chemist in Fish Street Hill, in whose service he was recognised by Dr. Sleigh,[1] his countryman and fellow-student at Edinburgh, who, to his eternal honour, relieved Oliver Goldsmith from this state of slavish degradation.

Under the auspices of his friend and countryman, Goldsmith commenced practice as a physician about the Bankside, and afterwards near the Temple; and although unsuccessful in procuring fees, had soon plenty of patients. It was now that he first thought of having recourse to that pen which afterwards afforded the public so much delight. He wrote, he laboured, he compiled; he is described by one contemporary as wearing a

[1] The Dr. Sligo of Foote's farce, *The Devil upon two Sticks in London.*

rusty full-trimmed black suit, the very livery of the muses, with his pockets stuffed with papers, and his head with projects; gradually he forced himself and his talents into notice, and was at last enabled to write, in one letter to a friend, that he was too poor to be gazed at, but too rich to need assistance;[1] and to boast in another, of the refined conversation which he was sometimes admitted to partake in.

He now circulated proposals for publishing, by subscription, his *Essay on Polite Literature in Europe*, the profits of which he destined to equipping himself for India, having obtained from the Company the appointment of physician to one of their factories on the coast of Coromandel. But to rise in literature was more his desire than to increase his fortune. "I eagerly long," he said, "to embrace every opportunity to separate myself from the vulgar, as much in my circumstances as I am already in my sentiments. . . . I find I want constitution and a strong steady disposition, which alone makes men great. I will, however, correct my faults, since I am conscious of them."[2]

Goldsmith's versatile talents and ready pen soon engaged him in the service of the booksellers; and doubtless the touches of his spirit and humour were used to enliven the dull pages of many a sorry miscellany and review; a mode of living which,

[1] Letter to Daniel Hodson, Esq. See *Life of Goldsmith*, prefixed to his Works, in four volumes, 1801, vol. i., p. 42.

[2] ["Whatever change of public estimation he experienced, the man was not to be altered, and he continued to exhibit a personal character which was neither much reformed by experience, nor dignified by reputation. It is but too well known that, with all his original and refined faculties, he was often the butt of witlings, and the dupe of impostors. He threw away his money at the gaming-table, and might also be said to be a losing gambler in conversation, for he aimed in all societies at being brilliant and argumentative; but generally chose to dispute on the subjects which he least understood, and contrived to forfeit as much credit for common sense as could be got rid of in colloquial intercourse. After losing his appointment to India, he applied to Lord Bute for a salary, to be enabled to travel into the interior of Asia. The petition was neglected because he was then unknown. The same boon, however, or some adequate provision, might have been obtained for him afterwards, when he was recommended to the Earl of Northumberland, at that time Lord-lieutenant of Ireland. But when he waited on the earl, he threw away his prepared compliments on his lordship's steward, and then retrieved the mistake by telling the nobleman, for whom he had meditated a courtly speech, that he had no confidence in the patronage of the great, but would rather rely upon the booksellers. There must have been something, however, with all his peculiarities, still endearing in his personal character. Burke was known to recall his memory with tears of affection in his eyes. It cannot be believed that the better genius of his writings was always absent from his conversation. One may conceive graces of his spirit to have been drawn forth by Burke and Reynolds, which neither Johnson nor Garrick had the sensibility to appreciate."—Campbell.]

joined to his own improvidence, rendered his income as fluctuating as his occupation. He wrote many essays for various periodical publications, and afterwards collected them into one volume, finding that they were unceremoniously appropriated by his contemporaries. In the preface, he compares himself to the fat man in a famine, who, when his fellow-sufferers propose to feast on the superfluous part of his person, insisted with some justice on having the first slice himself. But his most elaborate effort in this style is the *Citizen of the World;* letters supposed to be written by a Chinese philosopher, resident in England, an imitation of the *Lettres Persannes* of Montesquieu. Still, however, though subsisting thus precariously, he was getting forward in society; and had already, in the year 1761, made his way as far as Dr. Johnson, who seems, from their first acquaintance, till death separated them, to have entertained for Goldsmith the most sincere friendship, regarding his genius with respect, his failings with indulgence, and his person with affection.

It was probably soon after this first acquaintance that Necessity, the parent of so many works of genius, gave birth to the *Vicar of Wakefield*. The circumstances attending the sale of the work to the fortunate publisher are too singular to be told in any other words than those of Johnson, as reported by his faithful chronicler, Boswell.

"I received one morning a message from poor Goldsmith, that he was in great distress; and, as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return, and, having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill." [1]

Newberry, the purchaser of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, best known to the present generation by recollection of their infantine

[1] ["See Croker's edition of *Boswell*, vol. i., p. 429. Mrs. Piozzi gives the same anecdote with some variations; among others, that Johnson found Goldsmith with his bottle of Maderia in the *evening*, not the *morning;* and Mr. Croker inclines to adopt this more favourable account."]

studies,[1] was a man of worth as well as wealth, and the frequent patron of distressed genius. When he completed the bargain, which he probably entered into partly from compassion, partly from deference to Johnson's judgment, he had so little confidence in the value of his purchase that the *Vicar of Wakefield* remained in manuscript until the publication of the *Traveller* had established the fame of the author.

For this beautiful poem Goldsmith had collected materials during his travels; and a part of it had been actually written in Switzerland, and transmitted from that country to the author's brother, the Rev. Dr. Henry Goldsmith. His distinguished friend, Dr. Johnson, aided him with several general hints; and is said to have contributed the sentiment which Goldsmith has so beautifully versified in the concluding lines.

The publication of the *Traveller* gave the author all that celebrity which he had so long laboured to attain. He now assumed the professional dress of the medical science, a scarlet cloak, wig, sword, and cane, and was admitted as a valued member of that distinguished society, which afterwards formed the Literary Club, or as it is more commonly called, emphatically, *The* Club. For this he made certain sacrifices, renouncing some of the public places which he had formerly found convenient in point of expense and amusement; not without regret, for he used to say, "In truth, one must make some sacrifices to obtain good society; for here am I shut out of several places where I used to play the fool very agreeably." It often happened amid those sharper wits with whom he now associated that the simplicity of his character, mingled with an inaccuracy of expression, an undistinguishing spirit of vanity, and a hurriedness of conception, which led him often into absurdity, rendered Dr. Goldsmith in some degree the butt of the company. Garrick, in particular, who probably presumed somewhat on the superiority of a theatrical manager over a dramatic author, shot at him many shafts of small epigrammatic wit. It is likely that Goldsmith began to feel that this spirit was carried too far, and, to check it in the best taste, he composed his celebrated poem of *Retaliation*, in which the characters and failings of his associates are drawn with satire, at once pungent and good-humoured. Garrick is smartly chastised; Burke, the Dinner-bell of the House of Commons, is not spared; and of all the more distinguished

[1] ["Mr. John Newberry of St. Paul's Churchyard, died in December, 1767. For some account of his life and publications, see Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iii., p. 466 and 731-2."]

names of the Club, Johnson, Cumberland, and Reynolds alone escape the lash of the satirist. The former is not mentioned, and the two latter are even dismissed with unqualified and affectionate applause.[1] *Retaliation* had the effect of placing the author on a more equal footing with his society than he had ever before assumed. Even against the despotism of Johnson, though much respecting him, and as much beloved by him, Goldsmith made a more spirited stand than was generally ventured upon by the compeers of that arbitrary Sultan of literature. Of this Boswell has recorded a striking instance. Goldsmith had been descanting on the difficulty and importance of making animals in an apologue speak in character, and particularly instanced the Fable of the Little Fishes. Observing that Doctor Johnson was laughing scornfully, he proceeded smartly; "Why, Dr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think; for if *you* were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like whales."

To support the expense of his new dignities, Goldsmith

[1] ["I conclude my account of Goldsmith," says Mr. Cumberland, "with gratitude, for the epitaph he bestowed on me in his poem called *Retaliation*. It was upon a proposal started by Edmund Burke, that a party of friends, who had dined together at Sir Joshua Reynolds' and my house, should meet at the St. James's Coffee-house, which accordingly took place, and was occasionally repeated with much festivity and good fellowship. Dr. Bernard, Dean of Derry, a very amiable and old friend of mine, Dr. Douglas, since Bishop of Salisbury, Johnson, David Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Oliver Goldsmith, Edmund and Richard Burke, Hickey, with two or three others, constituted our party. At one of these meetings an idea was suggested of extemporary epitaphs upon the parties present; pen and ink were called for, and Garrick off hand wrote an epitaph with a good deal of humour upon poor Goldsmith, who was the first in jest, as he proved to be in reality, that we committed to the grave. The dean also gave him an epitaph, and Sir Joshua illuminated the dean's verses with a sketch of his bust in pen and ink, inimitably caricatured. Neither Johnson nor Burke wrote anything, and when I perceived that Oliver was rather sore, and seemed to watch me with that kind of attention which indicated his expectation of something in the same kind of burlesque with theirs, I thought it time to press the joke no further, and wrote a few couplets at a side-table, which, when I had finished, and was called upon by the company to exhibit, Goldsmith, with much agitation, besought me to spare him, and I was about to tear them, when Johnson wrested them out of my hand, and, in a loud voice, read them at the table. I have now lost all recollection of them, and, in fact, they were little worth remembering, but, as they were serious and complimentary, the effect upon Goldsmith was the more pleasing, for being so entirely unexpected. The concluding line, which is the only one I can call to mind, was—

'All mourn the poet, I lament the man.'

This I recollect, because he repeated it several times, and seemed much gratified by it. At our next meeting he produced his epitaphs, as they stand in the little posthumous poem above mentioned, and this was the last time he ever enjoyed the company of his friends."—*Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 369-71.]

laboured incessantly at the literary oar. The *Letters on the History of England*, commonly ascribed to Lord Lyttleton, and containing an excellent and entertaining abridgment of the annals of Britain, are the work of Goldsmith. His mode of compiling them we learn from some interesting anecdotes of the author, communicated to the public by Lee Lewes, an actor of genius, whom he patronised, and with whom he often associated.

"He first read in a morning, from Hume, Rapin, and sometimes Kennet, as much as he designed for one letter, marking down the passages referred to on a sheet of paper, with remarks. He then rode or walked out with a friend or two, whom he constantly had with him; returned to dinner, spent the day generally convivially, without much drinking (which he was never in the habit of), and when he went up to bed, took up his books and paper with him, where he generally wrote the chapter, or the best part of it, before he went to rest. This latter exercise cost him very little trouble, he said; for having all his materials ready for him, he wrote it with as much facility as a common letter.

"But of all his compilations, he used to say, his *Selections of English Poetry* showed more, 'the art of profession.' Here he did nothing but mark the particular passages with a red-lead pencil, and for this he got *two hundred pounds*—but then he used to add, 'a man shows his judgment in these selections, and he may be often twenty years of his life cultivating that judgment.'"

Goldsmith, amid these more petty labours, aspired to the honours of the sock, and the *Good-Natured Man* was produced at Covent Garden, 29th January, 1768, with the moderate success of nine nights' run.[1] The principal character the author probably drew from the weak side of his own; for no man was more liable than Goldsmith to be gulled by pretended friends. The character of Croaker, highly comic in itself, and admirably

[1] ["The business of painting our manners and lashing our vices has been truly in the hands of our novelists ever since Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne produced their strong and graphic delineations. These men were to their own times what Johnson and his brother moralists had been to a preceding age, and what the Wycherleys and Vanburghs had not been to another. They have been succeeded by a long line of writers in the same walk, vastly inferior, for the most part, to them in genius, but exerting infinitely greater power each over his own day, than any dramatist that has appeared among us within the period, if we except the brilliant usurpation of Foote, the *hundred days* of the dramatised lampoon. Even when the same writer has tried both walks with success, it is easy to see in which success has been best rewarded. What is the *Good-Natured Man* to the *Vicar of Wakefield?* Not very much more than *Tom Thumb* is to *Tom Jones*."—*Quarterly Review*, Sept. 1826.]

represented by Shuter, helped to save the piece, which was endangered by the scene of the bailiffs, then considered as too vulgar for the stage. Upon the whole, however, Goldsmith is said to have cleared five hundred pounds by this dramatic performance. He hired better chambers in the Temple, embarked more boldly in literary speculation, and unfortunately at the same time enlarged his ideas of expense, and indulged his habit of playing at games of hazard. The Memoirs, or Anecdotes, which we have before quoted, give a minute and curious description of his habits and enjoyments about this period, when he was constantly occupied with extracts, abridgments, and other arts of book-making, but at the same time working slowly, and in secret, on those immortal verses, which secure for him so high a rank among English poets.

"Goldsmith, though quick enough at prose," continues Mr. Lewes, "was rather slow in his poetry—not from the tardiness of fancy, but the time he took in pointing the sentiment, and polishing the versification. He was, by his own confession, four or five years collecting materials in all his country excursions for this poem (*The Deserted Village*), and was actually engaged in the construction of it above two years. His manner of writing poetry was this; he first sketched a part of his design in prose, in which he threw out his ideas as they occurred to him; he then sat carefully down to versify them, correct them, and add such other ideas as he thought better fitted to the subject. He sometimes would exceed his prose design by writing several verses impromptu, but these he would take uncommon pains afterwards to revise, lest they should be found unconnected with his main design.

"The writer of these Memoirs" (Lee Lewes) "called upon the Doctor the second morning after he had begun *The Deserted Village*, and to him he communicated the plan of his poem. 'Some of my friends,' continued he, 'differ with me on this plan, and think this depopulation of villages does not exist—but I am myself satisfied of the fact. I remember it in my own country, and have seen it in this.' He then read what he had done of it that morning, beginning,

> 'Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
> Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
> How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
> Where humble happiness endear'd each scene!
> How often have I paused on every charm,—
> The shelter'd cot,—the cultivated farm,—
> The never-failing brook,—the busy mill,—
> The decent church, that topt the neighbouring hill,—
> The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
> For talking age and whispering lovers made.'

'Come,' says he, 'let me tell you this is no bad morning's work;

and now, my dear boy, if you are not better engaged, I should be glad to enjoy a *Shoemaker's holiday* with you.' This *Shoemaker's holiday* was a day of great festivity to poor Goldsmith, and was spent in the following innocent manner:—

"Three or four of his intimate friends rendezvoused at his chambers, to breakfast, about ten o'clock in the morning; at eleven they proceeded by the City Road, and through the fields to Highbury Barn to dinner; about six o'clock in the evening they adjourned to White Conduit House to drink tea; and concluded the evening by supping at the Grecian or Temple Exchange Coffee-houses, or at the Globe, in Fleet Street. There was a very good ordinary of two dishes and pastry kept at Highbury Barn about this time (five-and-twenty years ago, in 1796) at 1od. per head, including a penny to the waiter, and the company generally consisted of literary characters, a few Templars, and some citizens who had left off trade. The whole expenses of this day's fête never exceeded a crown, and oftener from three-and-sixpence to four shillings, for which the party obtained good air and exercise, good living, the example of simple manners, and good conversation."

The reception given to the *Deserted Village*, so full of natural elegance, simplicity, and pathos, was of the warmest kind.[1] The publisher showed at once his skill and generosity, by pressing upon Dr. Goldsmith a hundred pounds, which the author insisted upon returning, when upon computation he found that it came to nearly a crown for every couplet, a sum which he conceived no couplet could be worth. The sale of the poem made him ample amends for this unusual instance of moderation. Lissoy, near Ballymahon, where his brother the clergyman had his living, claims the honour of being the spot from which the localities of the *Deserted Village* were derived. The church which tops the neighbouring hill, the mill, and the lake, are still

[1] ["Pleasing as Goldsmith is, it is impossible to ascribe variety to his poetical character: and Dr. Johnson has justly remarked something of an echoing resemblance of tone and sentiment between the *Traveller* and *Deserted Village*. But the latter is certainly an improvement on its predecessor. The field of contemplation in the *Traveller* is rather desultory. The other poem has an endearing locality, and introduces us to beings with whom the imagination contracts an intimate friendship. Fiction in poetry is not the reverse of truth, but her soft and enchanted resemblance; and this ideal beauty of nature has been seldom united with so much sober fidelity as in the groups and scenery of the *Deserted Village*. His chaste pathos makes him an insinuating moralist, and throws a charm of Claude-like softness over his descriptions of homely objects that would seem only fit to be the subjects of Dutch painting. But his quiet enthusiasm leads the affections to humble things without a vulgar association: and he inspires us with a fondness to trace the simplest recollections of Auburn, till we count the furniture of its ale-house, and listen to

'The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door.'"

Campbell.]

pointed out; and a hawthorn has suffered the penalty of poetical celebrity, being cut to pieces by those admirers of the bard, who desired to have classical tooth-pick cases and tobacco-stoppers. Much of this supposed locality may be fanciful, but it is a pleasing tribute to the poet in the land of his fathers.

Goldsmith's *Abridgements of the History of Rome and England* may here be noticed. They are eminently well calculated to introduce youth to the knowledge of their studies; for they exhibit the most interesting and striking events, without entering into controversy or dry detail. Yet the tone assumed in the *History of England* drew on the author the resentment of the more zealous Whigs, who accused him of betraying the liberties of the people, when, "God knows," as he expresses himself in a letter to Langton, "I had no thought for or against liberty in my head; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size, and which, as Squire Richard says, would do no harm to nobody."

His celebrated play of *She Stoops to Conquer* was Goldsmith's next work of importance. If it be the object of comedy to make an audience laugh, Johnson says that it was better obtained by this play than by any other of the period.[1] Lee Lewes was, for the first time, produced in a speaking character, as young Marlow, and is, therefore, entitled to record his own recollections concerning the piece.

"The first night of its performance, Goldsmith, instead of being at the Theatre, was found sauntering, between seven and eight o'clock, in the Mall, St. James's Park; and it was on the remonstance of a friend, who told him 'how useful his presence might be in making some sudden alterations which might be found necessary in the piece,' that he was prevailed on to go to the Theatre. He entered the stage-door just in the middle of the fifth act, when there was a hiss at the improbability of Mrs. Hardcastle supposing herself forty miles off, though on her own grounds, and near the house. 'What's that?' says the Doctor, terrified at the sound. 'Pshaw, Doctor,' says Colman, who was standing by the side of the scene, 'don't be fearful of *squibs*, when we have been sitting almost these two hours upon a barrel of gunpowder.'

"In the *Life of Dr. Goldsmith*, prefixed to his *Works*, the above reply of Colman's is said to have happened at the last rehearsal of the piece, but the fact was (I had it from the Doctor himself) as I have stated, and he never forgave it to Colman to the last hour of his life."

[1] [For a humorous account of the first performance of this play, see *Cumberland's Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 365-9.]

It may be here noticed that the leading incident of the piece was borrowed from a blunder of the author himself, who, while travelling in Ireland, actually mistook a gentleman's residence for an inn. It is remarkable enough that we ourselves are acquainted with another instance of the kind, which took place, however, in the middle rank of life.

It must be owned that, however kind, amiable, and benevolent Goldsmith showed himself to his contemporaries, more especially to such as needed his assistance, he had no small portion of the jealous and irritable spirit proper to the literary profession. He suffered a newspaper lampoon about this time to bring him into a foolish affray with Evans the editor, which did him but little credit.[1]

In the meantime, a neglect of economy, occasional losses at play, and too great a reliance on his own versatility and readiness of talent, had considerably embarrassed his affairs. He felt the pressure of many engagements, for which he had received advances of money, and which it was, nevertheless, impossible for him to carry on with that despatch which the booksellers thought themselves entitled to expect. One of his last publications was a *History of the Earth and Animated Nature*, in six volumes, which is to science what his abridgments are to history; a book which indicates no depth of research, or accuracy of information, but which presents to the ordinary reader a general and interesting view of the subject, couched in the clearest and most beautiful language, and abounding with excellent reflections and illustrations. It was of this work that Johnson threw out the remark which he afterwards interwove in his friend's epitaph—"He is now writing a Natural History, and will make it as agreeable as a Persian Tale."

But the period of his labours was now near. Goldsmith had for some time been subject to fits of the strangury, brought on by too severe application to sedentary labours; and one of those attacks, aggravated by mental distress, produced a fever. In spite of cautions to the contrary, he had recourse to Dr. James's fever powders, from which he received no relief. He died on the 4th April, 1774, and was privately interred in the Temple burial-ground. A monument, erected by subscription

[1] [Evans, a bookseller, received personal chastisement at the hands of Goldsmith, who afterwards published a rather pompous apology for this violence in the newspapers. See a conversation on the subject in *Boswell*, Croker's edition, vol. ii., p. 197. See also D'Israeli's *Calamities of Authors*, vol. ii., p. 84.]

in Westminster Abbey, bears a Latin inscription from the pen of Dr. Johnson:—

OLIVARI GOLDSMITH,
Poetæ, Physici, Historici,
Qui nullum fere scribendi genus non tetigit,
Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit,
Sive risus essent movendi,
Sive lacrymæ,
Affectuum potens at lenis dominator.
Ingenio, sublimis, vividus, versatilis;
Oratione, grandis, nitidus, venustus.
Hoc monumentum Memoriam colent
Sodalium amor,
Amicorum fides,
Lectorum veneratio.
Natus in Hibernia Forniæ Longfordiensis,
In loco cui nomen Pallas,
Nov. XXIX. MDCCXXXI,
Eblanæ literis institutus,
Obiit Londini,
April IV. MDCCLXXIV.

This elegant epitaph was the subject of a petition to Dr. Johnson, in the form of a round robin, entreating him to substitute an English inscription, as more proper for an author who had distinguished himself entirely by works written in English; but the doctor kept his purpose.

The person and features of Dr. Goldsmith were rather unfavourable. He was a short stout man, with a round face, much marked with the small-pox, and a low forehead, which is represented as projecting in a singular manner. Yet these ordinary features were marked by a strong expression of reflection and of observation.

The peculiarities of Goldsmith's disposition have been already touched upon in the preceding narrative. He was a friend to virtue, and in his most playful pages never forgets what is due to it. A gentleness, delicacy, and purity of feeling, distinguishes whatever he wrote, and bears a correspondence to the generosity of a disposition which knew no bounds but his last guinea. It was an attribute almost essential to such a temper, that he wanted the proper guards of firmness and decision, and permitted, even when aware of their worthlessness, the intrusions of cunning

and of effrontery. The story of the *White Mice* is well known; and in the humorous *History of the Haunch of Venison*, Goldsmith has recorded another instance of his being duped. This could not be entirely out of simplicity; for he, who could so well embody and record the impositions of Master Jenkinson, might surely have penetrated the schemes of more ordinary swindlers. But Goldsmith could not give a refusal; and, being thus cheated with his eyes open, no man could be a surer or easier victim to the impostors, whose arts he could so well describe. He might certainly have accepted the draught on neighbour Flamborough, and indubitably would have made the celebrated bargain of the gross of green spectacles. With this cullibility of temper was mixed a hasty and eager jealousy of his own personal consequence: he unwillingly admitted that anything was done better than he himself could have performed it; and sometimes made himself ridiculous by hastily undertaking to distinguish himself upon subjects which he did not understand. But with these weaknesses, and with that of carelessness in his own affairs, terminates all that censure can say of Goldsmith. The folly of submitting to imposition may be well balanced with the universality of his benevolence; and the wit which his writings evince more than counterbalances his defects in conversation, if these could be of consequence to the present and future generations.

"As a writer," says Dr. Johnson, "he was of the most distinguished class. Whatever he composed, he did it better than any other man could. And whether we regard him as a poet, as a comic writer, or as a historian, he was one of the first writers of his time, and will ever stand in the foremost class."

Excepting some short tales, Goldsmith gave to the department of the novelist only one work—the inimitable *Vicar of Wakefield*. We have seen that it was suppressed for nearly two years, until the publication of the *Traveller* had fixed the author's fame. Goldsmith had, therefore, time for revisal, but he did not employ it. He had been paid for his labour, as he observed, and could have profited nothing by rendering the work ever so perfect. This, however, was false reasoning, though not unnatural in the mouth of the author who must earn daily bread by daily labour. The narrative, which in itself is as simple as possible, might have been cleared of certain improbabilities, or rather impossibilities, which it now exhibits. We cannot, for instance, conceive how Sir William Thornhill should contrive to masquerade under the name of Burchell among his own tenantry, and upon his own

estate; and it is absolutely impossible to see how his nephew, the son, doubtless, of a younger brother (since Sir William inherited both title and property), should be nearly as old as the Baronet himself. It may be added, that the character of Burchell, or Sir William Thornhill, is in itself extravagantly unnatural. A man of his benevolence would never have so long left his nephew in the possession of wealth which he employed to the worst of purposes. Far less would he have permitted his scheme upon Olivia in a great measure to succeed, and that upon Sophia also to approach consummation; for, in the first instance, he does not interfere at all, and in the second, his intervention is accidental. These, and some other little circumstances in the progress of the narrative, might easily have been removed upon revisal.

But whatever defects occur in the tenor of the story, the admirable ease and grace of the narrative, as well as the pleasing truth with which the principal characters are designed, make the *Vicar of Wakefield* one of the most delicious morsels of fictitious composition on which the human mind was ever employed.[1] The principal character, that of the simple Pastor himself, with all the worth and excellency which ought to distinguish the ambassador of God to man, and yet with just so much of pedantry and literary vanity as serves to show that he is made of mortal mould, and subject to human failings, is one of the best and most pleasing pictures ever designed. It is perhaps impossible to place frail humanity before us in an attitude of more simple dignity than the Vicar, in his character of pastor, of parent, and of husband. His excellent helpmate, with all her motherly cunning, and housewifely prudence, loving and respecting her husband, but counterplotting his wisest schemes, at the dictates of maternal vanity, forms an excellent counterpart. Both, with their children around them, their quiet labour and domestic happiness, compose a fireside picture of such a perfect kind, as perhaps is nowhere else equalled. It is sketched indeed from common life, and is a strong contrast to the exaggerated and extraordinary characters and incidents which are the resource of those authors, who, like Bayes, make it their business to elevate and surprise; but the very simplicity of this charming book renders the pleasure it affords more per-

[1] ["I have found, however, one point where the German (Schlegel) is right—it is about the *Vicar of Wakefield*. 'Of all romances in miniature (and perhaps this is the best shape in which romance can appear) the *Vicar of Wakefield* is, I think, the most exquisite.' He thinks! he might be sure."—Byron, vol. v., p. 93.]

manent. We read the *Vicar of Wakefield* in youth and in age—we return to it again and again, and bless the memory of an author who contrives so well to reconcile us to human nature. Whether we choose the pathetic and distressing incidents of the fire, the scenes at the jail, or the lighter and humorous parts of the story, we find the best and truest sentiments enforced in the most beautiful language; and perhaps there are few characters of purer dignity have been described than that of the excellent pastor, rising above sorrow and oppression, and labouring for the conversion of those felons, into whose company he had been thrust by his villanous creditor. In too many works of this class, the critics must apologise for or censure particular passages in the narrative, as unfit to be perused by youth and innocence. But the wreath of Goldsmith is unsullied; he wrote to exalt virtue and expose vice; and he accomplished his task in a manner which raises him to the highest rank among British authors. We close his volume, with a sigh that such an author should have written so little from the stores of his own genius,[1] and that he should have been so prematurely removed from the sphere of literature, which he so highly adorned.

[1] [Mr. Cumberland says, "Distress drove Goldsmith upon undertakings neither congenial with his studies, nor worthy of his talents. I remember him, when, in his chamber in the Temple, he showed me the beginning of his *Animated Nature:* it was with a sigh, such as genius draws when hard necessity diverts it from its bent to drudge for bread, and talk of birds and beasts and creeping things, which Pidcock's showman would have done as well. Poor fellow, he hardly knew an ass from a mule, nor a turkey from a goose, but when he saw it on the table. But publishers hate poetry, and Paternoster Row is not Parnassus. Even the mighty Dr. Hill, who was not a very delicate feeder, could not make a dinner out of the press, till by a happy transformation into Hannah Glass, he turned himself into a cook, and sold receipts for made dishes to all the savoury readers in the kingdom. Then, indeed, the press acknowledged him second in fame only to John Bunyan—his feasts kept pace in sale with Nelson's fasts; and when his own name was fairly written out of credit, he wrote himself into an immortality under an alias. Now, though necessity, or, I should rather say, the desire of finding money for a masquerade, drove Oliver Goldsmith upon abridging histories, and turning Buffon into English, yet I much doubt if without that spur he would ever have put his Pegasus into action; no, if he had been rich the world would have been poorer than it is, by the loss of all the treasures of his genius and the contributions of his pen."—*Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 352.]

SAMUEL JOHNSON

Of all the men distinguished in this or any other age, Dr. Johnson has left upon posterity the strongest and most vivid impression, so far as person, manners, disposition, and conversation, are concerned. We do but name him, or open a book which he has written, and the sound and action recall to the imagination at once his form, his merits, his peculiarities, nay, the very uncouthness of his gestures, and the deep impressive tone of his voice. We learn not only what he said, but form an idea how he said it; and have, at the same time, a shrewd guess of the secret motive why he did so, and whether he spoke in sport or in anger, in the desire of conviction, or for the love of debate. It was said of a noted wag, that his bon-mots did not give full satisfaction when published, because he could not print his face. But with respect to Dr. Johnson, this has been in some degree accomplished; and, although the greater part of the present generation never saw him, yet he is, in our mind's eye, a personification as lively as that of Siddons in *Lady Macbeth*, or Kemble in *Cardinal Wolsey*.

All this, as the world well knows, arises from Johnson having found in James Boswell such a biographer, as no man but himself ever had, or ever deserved to have. The performance, which chiefly resembles it in structure, is the life of the philosopher Demophon, in Lucian; but that slight sketch is far inferior in detail and in vivacity to Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, which, considering the eminent persons to whom it relates, the quantity of miscellaneous information and entertaining gossip which it brings together, may be termed, without exception, the best parlour-window book that ever was written. Accordingly, such has been the reputation which it has enjoyed, that it renders useless even the form of an abridgment, which is the less necessary in this work, as the great Lexicographer only stands connected with the department of fictitious narrative by the brief tale of *Rasselas*.

A few dates and facts may be shortly recalled, for the sake of uniformity of plan, after which we will venture to offer a few remarks upon *Rasselas*, and the character of its great author.

Samuel Johnson was born and educated in Litchfield, where his father was a country bookseller of some eminence, since he

belonged to its magistracy. He was born 18th September, 1709. His schooldays were spent in his native city, and his education completed at Pembroke College, Oxford. Of gigantic strength of body, and mighty powers of mind, he was afflicted with that nameless disease on the spirits, which often rendered the latter useless;[1] and externally deformed by a scrofulous complaint, the scars of which disfigured his otherwise strong and sensible countenance.

The indigence of his parents compelled him to leave college upon his father's death in 1731, when he gathered in a succession of eleven pounds sterling. In poverty, however, his learning and his probity secured him respect. He was received in the best society of his native place. His first literary attempt, the translation of *Father Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia*, appeared during this period, and probably led him, at a later period, to lay in that remote kingdom the scene of his philosophical tale, which follows this essay. About the same time, he married a

[1] [" Mr. Michael Johnson was a man of a large and robust body, and of a strong and active mind; yet, as in the most solid rocks, veins of unsound substance are often discovered, there was in him a mixture of that disease, the nature of which eludes the most minute enquiry, though the effects are well known to be a weariness of life, an unconcern about those things which agitate the greater part of mankind, and a general sensation of gloomy wretchedness. From him then his son inherited, with some other qualities, ' a vile melancholy,' which in his too strong expression of any disturbance of the mind ' made him mad all his life, at least not sober.' "—Boswell.

" One of the most curious and important chapters in the history of the human mind is still to be written, that of hereditary insanity. The symptomatic facts by which the disease may be traced, are generally either disregarded from ignorance of their real cause and character, or, when observed, carefully suppressed by domestic or professional delicacy. This is natural and even laudable; yet there are several important reasons why the obscurity in which such facts are usually buried may be regretted. *Morally*, we should wish to know, as far as may be permitted to us, the nature of our own intellect, its powers and its weaknesses:—*Medically*, it might be possible, by early and systematic treatment, to avert or mitigate the disease, which, there is reason to suppose, is now often unknown or mistaken:—*Legally*, it would be desirable to have any additional means of discriminating between guilt and misfortune, and of ascertaining with more precision the nice bounds which divide moral guilt from physical errors; and in the highest and most important of all the springs of human thought or action, it would be consolatory and edifying to be able to distinguish with greater certainty, rational faith and judicious piety, from the enthusiastic confidence or the gloomy despondence of disordered imaginations. The memory of every man who has lived, not inattentively, in society, will furnish him with instances to which these considerations might have been usefully applied. But in reading the life of Dr. Johnson (who was conscious of the disease and of its cause, and of whose blood there remains no one whose feelings can now be offended), they should be kept constantly in view; not merely as a subject of general interest, but as elucidating and explaining many of the errors, peculiarities, and weaknesses of that extraordinary man."—Croker.]

wife considerably older than himself, and attempted to set up a school in the neighbourhood of Litchfield. The project proved unsuccessful; and in 1737, he set out to try to mend his fortunes in London, attended by David Garrick. Johnson had with him in manuscript his tragedy of *Irene*, and meant to commence dramatic author; Garrick was to be bred to the law—Fate had different designs for both.

There is little doubt that, upon his outset in London, Johnson felt in full force the ills which assail the unprotected scholar, whose parts are yet unknown to the public, and who must write at once for bread and for distinction.[1] His splendid imitation of Juvenal, *London*, a satire, was the first of his works which drew the attention of the public; yet, neither its celebrity, nor that of its more brilliant successor, the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, the deep and pathetic morality of which has often extracted tears from those whose eyes wander dry over pages professedly sentimental, could save the poet from the irksome drudgery of a writer of all work. His tragedy of *Irene* was unfortunate on the stage, and his valuable hours were consumed in obscure labour. He was fortunate, however, in a strong and virtuous power of thinking, which prevented his plunging into those excesses, in which neglected genius, in catching at momentary gratification, is so apt to lose character and respectability. While his friend, Savage, was wasting considerable powers in temporary gratification, Johnson was advancing slowly but surely into a higher class of society. The powers of his pen were supported by those of his conversation; he lost no friend by misconduct, no respect by a closer approach to intimacy, and each new friend whom he made, continued still his admirer.

The booksellers, also, were sensible of his value as a literary labourer, and employed him in that laborious and gigantic task, a Dictionary of the language. How it is executed is well known, and sufficiently surprising, considering that the learned author was a stranger to the Northern languages, on which English is

[1] ["Who would say that Johnson himself would have been such a champion in literature—such a front-rank soldier in the fields of fame, if he had not been pressed into the service, and driven on to glory with the bayonet of sharp necessity pointed at his back? If fortune had turned him into a field of clover, he would have laid down and rolled in it. The mere manual labour of writing would not have allowed his lassitude and love of ease to have taken the pen out of the ink-horn, unless the cravings of hunger had reminded him that he must fill the sheet before he saw the table-cloth. He might indeed have knocked down Osbourne for a blockhead, but he would not have knocked him down with a folio of his own writing."—Cumberland.]

radically grounded, and that the discoveries in grammar, since made by Horne Tooke, were then unknown. In the meantime, the publication of the *Rambler*, though not very successful during its progress, stamped the character of the author as one of the first moral writers of the age, and as eminently qualified to write, and even to improve, the English language.

In 1752, Johnson was deprived of his wife, a loss which he appears to have felt most deeply. After her death, society, the best of which was now open to a man who brought such stores to increase its pleasures, seems to have been his principal enjoyment, and his great resource when assailed by that malady of mind which embittered his solitary moments.

The *Idler*, scarcely so popular as the *Rambler*, followed in 1758. In 1759, *Rasselas* was hastily composed, in order to pay the expenses of his mother's funeral, and some small debts which she had contracted. This beautiful tale was written in one week, and sent in portions to the printer. Johnson told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he never afterwards read it over! The publishers paid the author a hundred pounds, with twenty-four more, when the work came to a second edition.

The mode in which *Rasselas* was composed, and the purposes for which it was written, show that the author's situation was still embarrassed. But his circumstances became more easy in 1762, when a pension of £300 placed him beyond the drudgery of labouring for mere subsistence. It was distinctly explained that this grant was made on public grounds alone, and intended as homage to Johnson's services for literature. But two political pamphlets, *The False Alarm*, and that upon the *Falkland Islands*, afterwards showed that the author was grateful.

In 1765, pushed forward by the satire of Churchill, Johnson published his subscription Shakspeare, for which proposals had been long in circulation.

The author's celebrated *Journey to the Hebrides* was published in 1775. Whatever might be his prejudices against Scotland, its natives must concede that his remarks concerning the poverty and barrenness of the country tended to produce those subsequent exertions which have done much to remedy the causes of reproach. The Scots were angry because Johnson was not enraptured with their scenery, which, from a defect of bodily organs, he could not appreciate, or even see;[1] and they

[1] [Miss Reynolds, who knew him longer, and saw him more constantly than Mr. Boswell, says, "Dr. Johnson's sight was so *very defective* that he could scarcely distinguish the face of his most intimate acquaintance

appear to have set rather too high a rate on the hospitality paid to a stranger, when they contended it should shut the mouth of a literary traveller upon all subjects but those of panegyric. Dr. Johnson took a better way of repaying the civilities he received, by exercising kindness and hospitality in London to all such friends as he had received attention from in Scotland.

His pamphlet, entitled *Taxation no Tyranny*, which drew upon him much wrath from those who supported the American cause, is written in a strain of high toryism, and tended to promote an event, pregnant with much good and evil, the separation of the mother country from the American colonies.

In 1777, he was engaged in one of his most pleasing, as well as most popular works, *The Lives of the British Poets*, which he executed with a degree of critical force and talent which has seldom been concentrated.[1]

Johnson's laborious and distinguished career terminated in 1783, when virtue was deprived of a steady supporter, society of a brilliant ornament, and literature of a successful cultivator. The latter part of his life was honoured with general applause, for none was more fortunate in obtaining and preserving the friendship of the wise and the worthy. Thus loved and venerated, Johnson might have been pronounced happy. But Heaven, in whose eyes strength is weakness, permitted his faculties to be clouded occasionally with that morbid affection of the spirits, which disgraced his talents by prejudices, and his manners by rudeness.

When we consider the rank which Dr. Johnson held, not only in literature, but in society, we cannot help figuring him to ourselves as the benevolent giant of some fairy tale, whose kindnesses and courtesies are still mingled with a part of the rugged ferocity imputed to the fabulous sons of Anak; or rather, perhaps, like a Roman Dictator, fetched from his farm, whose wisdom and heroism still relished of his rustic occupation. And there were times when, with all Johnson's wisdom, and all his wit, this rudeness of disposition, and the sacrifices and submissions which he unsparingly exacted, were so great, that even his kind and devoted admirer, Mrs. Thrale, seems at length to

at half a yard; and, in general, it was observable, that his critical remarks on *dress*, etc., were the result of very close inspection of the object, partly from curiosity, and partly from a desire of exciting admiration of his perspicuity, of which he was not a little ambitious."—Croker, vol. iii., p. 286.]

[1] ["Johnson strips many a leaf from every laurel. Still, Johnson's is the finest critical work extant, and can never be read without instruction and delight."—Byron, vol. vi., p. 376.]

have thought that the honour of being Johnson's hostess was almost counterbalanced by the tax which he exacted on her time and patience.

The cause of those deficiencies in temper and manners was no ignorance of what was fit to be done in society, or how far each individual ought to suppress his own wishes in favour of those with whom he associates; for, theoretically, no man understood the rules of good-breeding better than Dr. Johnson, or could act more exactly in conformity with them, when the high rank of those with whom he was in company for the time required that he should put the necessary constraint upon himself. But during the greater part of his life, he had been in a great measure a stranger to the higher society, in which such restraint is necessary; and it may be fairly presumed, that the indulgence of a variety of little selfish peculiarities, which it is the object of good-breeding to suppress, became thus familiar to him. The consciousness of his own mental superiority in most companies which he frequented, contributed to his dogmatism; and when he had attained his eminence as a dictator in literature, like other potentates, he was not averse to a display of his authority: resembling in this particular Swift, and one or two other men of genius, who have had the bad taste to imagine that their talents elevated them above observance of the common rules of society.[1] It must be also remarked that, in Johnson's time, the literary society of London was much more confined than at present, and that he sat the Jupiter of a little circle, sometimes indeed nodding approbation, but always prompt, on the slightest contradiction, to launch the thunders of rebuke and sarcasm. He was, in a word, despotic, and despotism will occasionally lead the best disposi-

[1] [Sir Walter Scott elsewhere supplies the following anecdote:—"Mr. Boswell has chosen to omit, for reasons which will be presently obvious, that Johnson and Adam Smith met at Glasgow; but I have been assured, by Professor John Miller, that they did so, and that Smith, leaving the party where he had met Johnson, happened to come to another where Miller was. Knowing that Smith had been in Johnson's society, they were anxious to know what had passed, and the more so, as Smith's temper seemed much ruffled. At first, Smith would only answer, 'He's a brute—he's a brute;' but, on closer examination, it appeared that Johnson no sooner saw Smith, than he attacked him for some point of his famous letter on the death of Hume. Smith vindicated the truth of his statement. 'What did Johnson say?' was the universal inquiry. 'Why, he said,' replied Smith, with the deepest impression of resentment,' he said, *you lie!*'—'And what did you reply?'—'I said, you are a son of a ——!' On such terms did these two great moralists meet and part, and such was the classical dialogue between two great teachers of philosophy."—Croker's *Boswell*, vol. iii., p. 65.]

tions into unbecoming abuse of power. It is not likely that any one will again enjoy, or have an opportunity of abusing, the singular degree of submission which was rendered to Johnson by all around him. The unreserved communications of friends, rather than the spleen of enemies, have occasioned his character being exposed in all its shadows, as well as its lights. But those, when summed and counted, amount only to a few narrow-minded prejudices concerning country and party, from which few ardent tempers remain entirely free, an over-zeal in politics, which is an ordinary attribute of the British character, and some violences and solecisms in manners, which left his talents, morals, and benevolence, alike unimpeachable.[1]

Of *Rasselas*, translated into so many languages, and so widely circulated through the literary world, the merits have been long justly appreciated. It was composed in solitude and sorrow; and the melancholy cast of feeling which it exhibits sufficiently evinces the temper of the author's mind. The resemblance, in some respects, betwixt the tenor of the moral and that of *Candide*, is striking, and Johnson himself admitted that, if the authors could possibly have seen each other's manuscript, they could not have escaped the charge of plagiarism. But they resemble each other like a wholesome and a poisonous fruit. The object of the witty Frenchman is to induce a distrust of the wisdom of the great Governor of the Universe, by presuming to arraign him of incapacity before the creatures of his will. Johnson uses arguments drawn from the same premises, with the benevolent view of encouraging men to look to another and a better world for the satisfaction of wishes which in this seem only to be awakened in order to be disappointed. The one is a fiend — a merry devil, we grant — who scoffs at and derides human miseries; the other, a friendly though grave philosopher, who shows us the nothingness of earthly hopes, to teach us that our affections ought to be placed higher.

The work can scarce be termed a narrative, being in a great measure void of incident; it is rather a set of moral dialogues on the various vicissitudes of human life, its follies, its fears, its hopes, its wishes, and the disappointment in which all terminate.

[1] [" To obviate all the reflections which have gone round the world to Johnson's prejudice, by applying to him the epithet of a *bear*, let me impress upon my readers a just and happy saying of my friend Goldsmith, who knew him well:—' Johnson, to be sure, has a roughness in his manner; but no man alive has a more tender heart. *He has nothing of the bear but his skin.*' "—Boswell.]

The style is in Johnson's best manner; enriched and rendered sonorous by the triads and quaternions which he so much loved, and balanced with an art which perhaps he derived from the learned Sir Thomas Brown. The reader may sometimes complain, with Boswell, that the unalleviated picture of human helplessness and misery, leaves sadness upon the mind after perusal. But the moral is to be found in the conclusion of the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, a poem which treats of the same melancholy subject, and closes with this sublime strain of morality:—

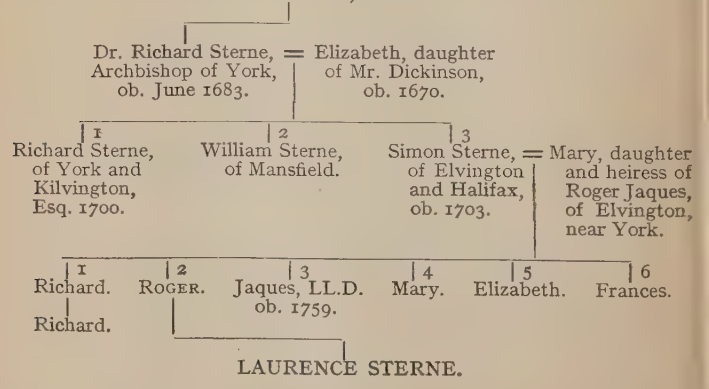
> " Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
> Obedient passions, and a will resign'd;
> For Love, which scarce collective man can fill;
> For Patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill;
> For Faith, that, panting for a happier seat,
> Counts death kind nature's signal of retreat:
> These goods for man the laws of Heaven ordain;
> These goods He grants, who grants the power to gain;
> With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
> And makes the happiness she cannot find."

LAURENCE STERNE

LAURENCE STERNE was one of those few authors who have anticipated the labours of the biographer and left to the world what they desired should be known of their family and their life. It is but a slight sketch, however, addressed to his daughter, and stops short just where the reader becomes most interested in its progress, being very succinct in all which regards the author's personal history.

"Roger Sterne"[1] (says this narrative), "grandson to Archbishop Sterne, Lieutenant in Handaside's regiment, was married to Agnes Hebert, widow of a captain of a good family. Her family name was (I believe) Nuttle; though, upon recollection, that was the name of her father-in-law, who was a noted sutler in Flanders, in Queen Anne's wars, where my father married his wife's daughter (N.B. he was in debt to him), which was in September 25, 1711, old style. This Nuttle had a son by my grandmother—a fine person of a man, but a graceless whelp!—what became of him I know not. The family (if any left) live now at Clonmel, in the south of Ireland; at which town I was born, November 24, 1713, a few days after my mother arrived from Dunkirk. My birthday was ominous to my poor father, who was, the day of our arrival, with

[1] Mr. Sterne was descended from a family of that name in Suffolk, one of which settled in Nottinghamshire. The following genealogy is extracted from Thoresby's *Ducatus Leodinensis*, p. 215.


SIMON STERNE, of Mansfield.
Dr. Richard Sterne, Archbishop of York, ob. June 1683.
= Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. Dickinson, ob. 1670.
1 Richard Sterne, of York and Kilvington, Esq. 1700.
2 William Sterne, of Mansfield.
3 Simon Sterne, of Elvington and Halifax, ob. 1703.
= Mary, daughter and heiress of Roger Jaques, of Elvington, near York.
1 Richard.
2 ROGER.
3 Jaques, LL.D. ob. 1759.
4 Mary.
5 Elizabeth.
6 Frances.
Richard.
LAURENCE STERNE.

many other brave officers, broke, and sent adrift into the wide world, with a wife and two children; the elder of which was Mary. She was born at Lisle, in French Flanders, July 10, 1712, new style. This child was the most unfortunate: She married one Weemans, in Dublin, who used her most unmercifully; spent his substance, became a bankrupt, and left my poor sister to shift for herself; which she was able to do but for a few months, for she went to a friend's house in the country, and died of a broken heart. She was a most beautiful woman, of a fine figure, and deserved a better fate. The regiment in which my father served being broke, he left Ireland as soon as I was able to be carried, with the rest of his family, and came to the family-seat at Elvington, near York, where his mother lived. She was daughter to Sir Roger Jacques, and an heiress. There we sojourned for about ten months, when the regiment was established, and our household decamped with bag and baggage for Dublin. Within a month of our arrival, my father left us, being ordered to Exeter; where, in a sad winter, my mother and her two children followed him, travelling from Liverpool, by land, to Plymouth.—(Melancholy description of this journey not necessary to be transmitted here.)—In twelve months we were all sent back to Dublin. My mother, with three of us (for she lay-in at Plymouth of a boy, Joram), took ship at Bristol, for Ireland, and had a narrow escape from being cast away, by a leak springing up in the vessel. At length, after many perils and struggles, we got to Dublin. There my father took a large house, furnished it, and in a year and a half's time spent a great deal of money. In the year one thousand seven hundred and nineteen, all unhinged again; the regiment was ordered, with many others, to the Isle of Wight, in order to embark for Spain in the Vigo expedition. We accompanied the regiment, and were driven into Milford Haven, but landed at Bristol; from thence, by land, to Plymouth again, and to the Isle of Wight; where, I remember, we stayed encamped some time before the embarkation of the troops—(in this expedition, from Bristol to Hampshire, we lost poor Joram, a pretty boy, four years old, of the small-pox)—my mother, sister, and myself, remained at the Isle of Wight during the Vigo expedition, and until the regiment had got back to Wicklow, in Ireland; from whence my father sent for us. We had poor Joram's loss supplied, during our stay in the Isle of Wight, by the birth of a girl, Anne, born September the twenty-third, one thousand seven hundred and nineteen. This pretty blossom fell at the age of three years, in the barracks of Dublin. She was, as I well remember, of a fine delicate frame, not made to last long—as were most of my father's babes. We embarked for Dublin, and had all been cast away by a most violent storm; but through the intercessions of my mother, the captain was prevailed upon to turn back into Wales, where we stayed a month, and at length got into Dublin, and travelled by land to Wicklow: where my father had for some weeks given us over for lost. We lived in the barracks at Wicklow one year (one thousand seven hundred and twenty) when Devijeher (so called after Colonel Devijeher) was born; from thence we decamped to stay half a year with Mr. Featherston, a clergyman, about seven miles from

Wicklow; who, being a relation of my mother's, invited us to his parsonage at Animo.[1] It was in this parish, during our stay, that I had that wonderful escape in falling through a mill-race whilst the mill was going, and of being taken up unhurt; the story is incredible, but known for truth in all that part of Ireland, where hundreds of the common people flocked to see me. From hence we followed the regiment to Dublin, where we lay in the barracks a year. In this year (one thousand seven hundred and twenty-one) I learnt to write, etc. The regiment ordered in twenty-two to Carrickfergus, in the north of Ireland. We all decamped; but got no further than Drogheda; thence ordered to Mullengar, forty miles west, where, by Providence, we stumbled upon a kind relation, a collateral descendant from Archbishop Sterne, who took us all to his castle, and kindly entertained us for a year, and sent us to the regiment to Carrickfergus, loaded with kindnesses, etc. A most rueful and tedious journey had we all (in March) to Carrickfergus, where we arrived in six or seven days. Little Devijeher here died; he was three years old; he had been left behind at nurse at a farm-house near Wicklow, but was fetched to us by my father the summer after:—another child sent to fill his place, Susan. This babe, too, left us behind in this weary journey. The autumn of that year, or the spring afterwards (I forget which), my father got leave of his colonel to fix me at school, which he did near Halifax, with an able master; with whom I stayed some time, till, by God's care of me, my cousin Sterne, of Elvington, became a father to me, and sent me to the university, etc., etc. To pursue the thread of our story, my father's regiment was, the year after, ordered to Londonderry, where another sister was brought forth, Catherine, still living; but most unhappily estranged from me by my uncle's wickedness and her own folly. From this station the regiment was sent to defend Gibraltar, at the siege, where my father was run through the body by Captain Phillips, in a duel (the quarrel began about a goose!); with much difficulty he survived, though with an impaired constitution, which was not able to withstand the hardships it was put to; for he was sent to Jamaica, where he soon fell by the country fever, which took away his senses first, and made a child of him; and then, in a month or two, walking about continually without complaining, till the moment he sat down in an arm-chair, and breathed his last, which was at Port Antonio, on the north of the island. My father was a little smart man, active to the last degree in all exercises, most patient of fatigue and disappointments, of which it pleased God to give him full measure. He was, in his temper, somewhat rapid and hasty, but of a kindly sweet disposition, void of all design; and so innocent in his own intentions that he suspected no one; so that you might have cheated him ten times in a day, if nine had not been sufficient for your purpose. My poor father died in March, 1731. I remained

[1] This village, or rather hamlet, is within a few miles of the romantic lake called Glandelow, on which are to be seen the singularly interesting ecclesiastical antiquities, called the Seven Churches. The mill where Sterne encountered this remarkable risk has been only lately destroyed; and his escape still lives in village tradition.

at Halifax till about the latter end of that year, and cannot omit mentioning this anecdote of myself and schoolmaster:—He had the ceiling of the school-room new whitewashed; the ladder remained there. I, one unlucky day, mounted it, and wrote with a brush, in large capital letters, LAU. STERNE, for which the usher severely whipped me. My master was very much hurt at this, and said, before me, that never should that name be effaced, for I was a boy of genius, and he was sure I should come to preferment. This expression made me forget the stripes I had received. In the year thirty-two [1] my cousin sent me to the university, where I stayed some time. 'Twas there that I commenced a friendship with Mr. H——, which has been lasting on both sides. I then came to York, and my uncle got me the living of Sutton; and at York I became acquainted with your mother, and courted her for two years: she owned she liked me, but thought herself not rich enough, or me too poor, to be joined together. She went to her sister's in S——; and I wrote to her often. I believe then she was partly determined to have me, but would not say so. At her return she fell into a consumption; and one evening that I was sitting by her, with an almost broken heart to see her so ill, she said, 'My dear Laurey, I never can be yours, for I verily believe I have not long to live! but I have left you every shilling of my fortune.' Upon that she showed me her will. This generosity overpowered me. It pleased God that she recovered, and I married her in the year 1741. My uncle [2] and myself were then upon very good terms; for he soon got me the Prebendary of York; but he quarrelled with me afterwards, because I would not write paragraphs in the newspapers; though he was a party man, I was not, and detested such dirty work, thinking it beneath me. From that period he became my bitterest enemy.[3] By my wife's means I got the living of Stillington; a friend of hers in the south had promised her that, if she married a clergyman in Yorkshire, when the living became vacant, he would make her a compliment of it. I remained near twenty years at Sutton, doing duty at both places. I had then very good health. Books, painting,[4] fiddling, and shooting, were my amusements. As to the squire of the parish, I cannot say we were on a very friendly footing; but at Stillington, the family of the C——s showed us every kindness: 'twas most truly agreeable to be within a mile and a half of an amiable family, who were ever

[1] He was admitted of Jesus College, in the University of Cambridge, 6th July, 1733, under the tuition of Mr. Cannon.
Matriculated 29th March, 1735.
Admitted to the degree of B.A. in January, 1736.
Admitted M.A. at the commencement of 1740.

[2] Jaques Sterne, LL.D. He was Prebendary of Durham, Canon Residentiary, Precentor, and Prebendary of York, Rector of Rise, and Rector of Hornsey cum Riston, both in the East Riding of the county of York. He died June 9th, 1759.

[3] It hath, however, been insinuated that he for some time wrote a periodical electioneering paper at York, in defence of the Whig interest.—*Monthly Review*, vol. liii., p. 344.

[4] A specimen of Mr. Sterne's abilities in the art of designing may be seen in Mr. Wodhul's Poems, 8vo, 1772.

cordial friends. In the year 1760, I took a house at York for your mother and yourself, and went up to London to publish [1] my two first volumes of Shandy.[2] In that year Lord Falconbridge presented me with the curacy of Coxwould; a sweet retirement in comparison of Sutton. In sixty-two I went to France before the peace was concluded; and you both followed me. I left you both in France, and in two years after, I went to Italy for the recovery of my health; and, when I called upon you, I tried to engage your mother to return to England with me: [3] she and yourself are at length come, and I have had the inexpressible joy of seeing my girl every thing I wished for.

"*I have set down these particulars relating to my family and self for my Lydia, in case hereafter she might have a curiosity, or a kinder motive, to know them.*"

To these notices, the following brief account of his death has been added by another writer:—

"As Mr. Sterne, in the foregoing, hath brought down the account of himself until within a few months of his death, it remains only to mention, that he left York about the end of the year 1767, and came to London, in order to publish *The Sentimental Journey*, which he had written during the preceding summer at his favourite living of Coxwould. His health had been for some time declining; but he continued to visit his friends, and retained his usual flow of spirits. In February, 1768, he began to perceive the approaches of death; and with the concern of a good man, and the solicitude of an affectionate parent, devoted his attention to the future welfare of his daughter. His letters, at this period, reflect so much credit on his character, that it is to be lamented some others in the collection were permitted to see the light. After a short struggle with his disorder, his debilitated and worn-out frame submitted to fate on the 18th day of March, 1768, at his lodgings in Bond Street. He was buried at the new burying-ground belonging to the parish of

[1] The first edition was printed in the preceding year at York.

[2] The following is the order in which Mr. Sterne's publications appeared:
—1747. The Case of Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath considered. A Charity Sermon preached on Good Friday, April 17, 1747, for the support of two charity schools in York.
1750. The Abuses of Conscience. Set forth in a sermon preached in the cathedral church of St. Peter, York, at the Summer Assizes, before the Hon. Mr. Baron Clive, and the Hon. Mr. Baron Smythe, on Sunday, July 29, 1750.
1759. Vol. 1 and 2 of Tristram Shandy.
1760. Vol. 1 and 2 of Sermons.
1761. Vol. 3 and 4 of Tristram Shandy.
1762. Vol. 5 and 6 of Tristram Shandy.
1765. Vol. 7 and 8 of Tristram Shandy.
1766. Vols. 3, 4, 5, and 6 of Sermons.
1767. Vol. 9 of Tristram Shandy.
1768. The Sentimental Journey.
The remainder of his works were published after his death.

[3] From this passage, it appears that the present account of Mr. Sterne's Life and Family was written about six months only before his death.

St. George, Hanover Square, on the 22nd of the same month, in the most private manner; and hath since been indebted to strangers for a monument very unworthy of his memory; on which the following lines are inscribed:—

Near to this Place
Lies the Body of
The Reverend LAURENCE STERNE, A.M.
Died September 13, 1768,
Aged 53 Years.[1]

To these Memoirs we can only add a few circumstances. The Archbishop of York, referred to as great-grandfather of the author, was Dr. Richard Sterne, who died in June, 1683. The family came from Suffolk to Nottinghamshire, and are described by Guillam as bearing Or a cheveron, between three crosses flory sable. The crest is that Starling proper, which might incur the censure of a zealous herald. It is a pun upon *Estourneau*, the French for a starling, as approaching to the proper name Sterne. This may be termed *canting*, in the armorial language, but the pen of Yorick has rendered it immortal.

Sterne was educated at Jesus College, Cambridge, and took the degree of Master of Arts there in 1740. His protector and patron, in the outset of life, was his uncle Dr. Jaques Sterne, who was Prebendary of Durham, Canon Residentiary, Precentor, and Prebendary of York, with other good preferments. Dr. Sterne was a keen Whig, and zealous supporter of the Hanoverian succession. The politics of the times being extremely violent, he was engaged in many controversies, particularly with Dr. Richard Burton, a surgeon and man-midwife, whom he had arrested upon a charge of high treason, during the affair of 1745. Laurence Sterne, in the Memoir which precedes these notices, represents himself as having quarrelled with his uncle, because he would not assist him with his pen in controversies of this description; yet there is reason to believe he adopted his kinsman's enmities in some degree, since he consigned Dr. Burton to painful immortality, under the name of Dr. Slop.

When settled in Yorkshire, Sterne has represented his time as much engaged with books, music, and painting. The former seems to have been in a great measure supplied by the library of Skelton Castle, the abode of his intimate friend and relation, John Hall Stevenson, author of the witty and indecent collection

[1] It is scarcely necessary to observe that this date is erroneous.

entitled *Crazy Tales*, where there is a very humorous description of his ancient residence, under the name of Crazy Castle. This library had the same cast of antiquity which belonged to the castle itself, and doubtless contained much of that rubbish of ancient literature, in which the labour and ingenuity of Sterne contrived to find a mine. Until 1759, Sterne had only printed two sermons; but in that year he surprised the world by publishing the two first volumes of *Tristram Shandy*. Sterne states himself, in a letter to a friend, as being "tired of employing his brains for other people's advantage—a foolish sacrifice I have made for some years to an ungrateful person." This passage probably alludes to his quarrel with his uncle; and as he mentions having taken a small house in York for the education of his daughter, it is probable that he looked to his pen for some assistance, though, in a letter to a nameless doctor, who had accused him of writing in order to have *nummum in loculo*, he declares he wrote, not to be fed, but to be famous. *Tristram*, however, procured the author both fame and profit. The brilliant genius, which mingled with so much real or affected eccentricity, the gaping astonishment of the readers who could not conceive the drift or object of the publication, with the ingenuity of those who attempted to discover the meaning of passages which really had none, gave the book a most extraordinary degree of eclat. But the applause of the public was not unmingled with censure. Sterne was not on good terms with his professional brethren: he had too much wit, and too little forbearance in the use of it; too much vivacity, and too little respect for his cloth and character, to maintain the formalities, or even the decencies, of the clerical station; and, moreover, he had, in the full career of his humour, assigned to some of his grave compeers ridiculous epithets and characters, which they did not resent the less, that they were certainly witty, and probably applicable. Indeed, to require a person to pardon an insult on account of the wit which accompanies the infliction, although it is what jesters often seem to expect, is as reasonable as to desire a wounded man to admire the painted feathers which wing the dart by which he is pierced. The tumult was loud on all sides; but amid shouts of applause and cries of censure, the notoriety of *Tristram* spread still wider and wider, and the fame of Sterne rose in proportion. The author therefore triumphed, and bid the critics defiance.

"I shall be attacked and pelted," he says, in one of his letters, "either from cellar or garret, write what I will; and, besides, must

expect to have a party against me of many hundreds, who either do not, or will not, laugh—'tis enough that I divide the world—at least I will rest contented with it."

On another occasion he says:—

"If my enemies knew that, by this rage of abuse and ill will, they were effectually serving the interests both of myself and works, they would be more quiet; but it has been the fate of my betters, who have found that the way to fame is like the way to heaven, through much tribulation; and till I shall have the honour to be as much maltreated as Rabelais and Swift were, I must continue humble, for I have not filled up the measure of half their persecutions."

The author went to London to enjoy his fame, and met with all that attention which the public gives to men of notoriety. He boasts of being engaged fourteen dinners deep, and received this hospitality as a tribute; while his contemporaries saw the festivity in a very different light. "Any man who has a name, or who has the power of pleasing," said Johnson, "will be very generally invited in London. The *man Sterne*, I am told, has had engagements for three months." Johnson's feelings of morality, and respect for the priesthood, led him to speak of Sterne with contempt; but when Goldsmith added, "And a very dull fellow," he replied with his emphatic, "Why, no, sir."

The two first volumes of *Tristram* proved introductors—singular in their character certainly—to two volumes of Sermons, which the simple name of the Rev. Laurence Sterne (ere yet he became known as the author of this wild and capricious offspring of fancy), would never have recommended to notice, but which were sought for and read eagerly under that of Yorick. They maintained the character of the author for wit, genius, and eccentricity.

The third and fourth volumes of *Tristram* appeared in 1761, and the fifth and sixth in 1762. Both these publications were as popular as the two first volumes. The seventh and eighth, which came forth in 1765, did not attract so much attention. The novelty was in a great measure over; and although they contain some of the most beautiful passages which ever fell from the author's pen, yet neither uncle Toby nor his faithful attendant were sufficient to attract the public favour in the same degree as before. Thus the popularity of this singular work was for a time impeded by that peculiar and affected style, which had at first attracted by its novelty, but which ceased to please when it was no longer new. Four additional volumes of Sermons appeared

in 1766; and in 1767 the ninth and last volume of *Tristram Shandy*. "I shall publish," he says, "but one this year; and the next I shall begin a new work of four volumes, which when finished I shall continue *Tristram* with fresh spirit."

The new work was unquestionably his *Sentimental Journey;* for which, according to the eivdence of La Fleur, Sterne had made much larger collections than were ever destined to see the light. The author's health was now become extremely feeble; and his Italian travels were designed, if possible, to relieve his consumptive complaints. The remedy proved unsuccessful; yet he lived to arrive in England, and to prepare for the press the first part of the *Sentimental Journey*, which was published in 1768.

In this place we may insert with propriety those notices of Sterne and his valet La Fleur, which appear in Mr. Davis's interesting selection of anecdotes, which he has entitled an *Olio*.

"La Fleur was born in Burgundy. When a mere child he conceived a strong passion to see the world, and at eight years of age ran away from his parents. His prevenancy was always his passport, and his wants were easily supplied—milk, bread, and a straw-bed amongst the peasantry, were all he wanted for the night, and in the morning he wished to be on his way again. This rambling life he continued till he attained his tenth year, when being one day on the Pont Neuf at Paris, surveying with wonder the objects that surrounded him, he was accosted by a drummer, who easily enlisted him in the service. For six years La Fleur beat his drum in the French army; two years more would have entitled him to his discharge, but he preferred anticipation, and, exchanging dress with a peasant, easily made his escape. By having recourse to his old expedients, he made his way to Montreuil, where he introduced himself to Varenne, who fortunately took a fancy to him. The little accommodations he needed were given him with cheerfulness; and as what we sow we wish to see flourish, this worthy landlord promised to get him a master; and as he deemed the best not better than La Fleur merited, he promised to recommend him to *un Milord Anglois*. He fortunately could perform as well as promise, and he introduced him to Sterne, ragged as a colt, but full of health and hilarity. The little picture which Sterne has drawn of La Fleur's Amours is so far true—He was fond of a very pretty girl at Montreuil, the elder of two sisters, who, if living, he said, resembled the Maria of Moulines: her he afterwards married, and, whatever proof it might be of his affection, was none of his prudence, for it made him not a jot richer or happier than he was before. She was a mantua-maker, and her closest application could produce no more than *six sous* a-day; finding that her assistance could go little towards their support, and after having had a daughter by her, they separated and he went to service. At length, with what money he had got together by his servitude, he returned

to his wife, and they took a public-house in Royal Street, Calais. There ill luck attended him—war broke out; and the loss of the English sailors, who navigated the packets, and who were his principal customers, so reduced his little business, that he was obliged again to quit his wife, and confide to her guidance the little trade which was insufficient to support them both. He returned in March, 1783, but his wife had fled. A strolling company of comedians passing through the town, had seduced her from her home, and no tale or tidings of her have ever since reached him. From the period he lost his wife, says our informant, he has frequently visited England, to whose natives he is extremely partial, sometimes as a sergeant, at others as an express. Where zeal and diligence were required, La Fleur was never yet wanting."

In addition to La Fleur's account of himself (continues Mr. Davis), the writer of the preceding obtained from him several little circumstances relative to his master, as well as the characters depicted by him, a few of which, as they would lose by abridgment, I shall give *verbatim.*

"There were moments," said La Fleur, "in which my master appeared sunk into the deepest dejection—when his calls upon me for my services were so seldom, that I sometimes apprehensively pressed in upon his privacy, to suggest what I thought might divert his melancholy. He used to smile at my well-meant zeal, and I could see he was happy to be relieved. At others, he seemed to have received a new soul—he launched into the levity natural *à mon pays,*" said La Fleur, "and cried gaily enough, '*Vive la bagatelle!*' It was in one of these moments that he became acquainted with the Grisette of the glove shop—she afterwards visited him at his lodgings, upon which La Fleur made not a single remark; but on naming the *fille de chambre,* his other visitant, he exclaimed, 'It was certainly a pity—she was so pretty and *petite.*'"

The lady mentioned under the initial L. was the Marquise Lamberti; to the interest of this lady he was indebted for the passport, the want of which began to make him seriously uneasy. Count de B. (Breteuil), notwithstanding the Shakspeare, La Fleur thinks, would have troubled himself little about him. Choiseul was minister at the time.

"*Poor Maria*

Was, alas! no fiction.—When we came up to her," said La Fleur, "she was grovelling in the road like an infant, and throwing the dust upon her head—and yet few were more lovely. Upon Sterne's accosting her with tenderness, and raising her in his arms, she collected herself, and resumed some composure—told him her tale of misery, and wept upon his breast—my master sobbed aloud. I saw her gently disengage herself from his arms, and she sung him the service to the Virgin; my poor master covered his face with his

hands, and walked by her side to the cottage where she lived; there he talked earnestly to the old woman."

"Every day," said La Fleur, "while we stayed there, I carried them meat and drink from the hotel, and when we departed from Moulines, my master left his blessings and some money with the mother."—"How much," added he, "I know not—he always gave more than he could afford."

Sterne was frequently at a loss upon his travels for ready money. Remittances were become interrupted by war, and he had wrongly estimated his expenses; he had reckoned along the post-roads, without adverting to the wretchedness that was to call upon him in his way.

"At many of our stages my master has turned to me with tears in his eyes—'These poor people oppress me, La Fleur; how shall I relieve me?' He wrote much, and to a late hour." I told La Fleur of the inconsiderable quantity he had published; he expressed extreme surprise. "I know," said he, "upon our return from this tour, there was a large trunk completely filled with papers."—"Do you know anything of their tendency, La Fleur?"—"Yes; they were miscellaneous remarks upon the manners of the different nations he visited; and in Italy he was deeply engaged in making the most elaborate enquiries into the differing governments of the towns, and the characteristic peculiarities of the Italians of the various states."

To effect this, he read much—for the collections of the Patrons of Literature were open to him; he observed more. Singular as it may seem, Sterne endeavoured in vain to speak Italian. His valet acquired it on their journey; but his master, though he applied now and then, gave it up at length as unattainable. "I the more wondered at this," said La Fleur, "as he must have understood Latin."

The assertion, sanctioned by Johnson, that Sterne was licentious and dissolute in conversation, stands thus far contradicted by the testimony of La Fleur: "His conversation with women," he said, "was of the most interesting kind; he usually left them serious, if he did not find them so."

The Dead Ass

Was no invention. The mourner was as simple and affecting as Sterne has related. La Fleur recollected the circumstance perfectly.

To Monks

Sterne never exhibited any particular sympathy. La Fleur remembered several pressing in upon him, to all of whom his

answer was the same—*Mon père, je suis occupé. Je suis pauvre comme vous.*

In March, 1768, Laurence Sterne, his frame exhausted by long debilitating illness, expired at his lodgings in Bond Street, London. There was something in the manner of his death singularly resembling the particulars detailed by Mrs. Quickly, as attending that of Falstaff, the compeer of Yorick for infinite jest, however unlike in other particulars. While life was ebbing fast, and the patient lay on his bed totally exhausted, he complained that his feet were cold, and requested the female attendant to chafe them. She did so, and it seemed to relieve him. He complained that the cold came up higher; and whilst the assistant was in the act of rubbing his ankles and legs, he expired without a groan. It was also remarkable that his death took place much in the manner which he himself had wished; and that the last offices were rendered him, not in his own house, or by the hand of kindred affection, but in an inn, and by strangers.

We are well acquainted with Sterne's features and personal appearance, to which he himself frequently alludes. He was tall and thin, with a hectic and consumptive appearance. His features, though capable of expressing with peculiar effect the sentimental emotions by which he was often affected, had also a shrewd, humorous, and sarcastic character, proper to the wit, and the satirist, and not unlike that which predominates in the portraits of Voltaire. His conversation was animated, and witty; but Johnson complained that it was marked by licence, better suiting the company of the Lord of Crazy Castle than of the great moralist. It has been said, and probably with truth, that his temper was variable and unequal, the natural consequence of an irritable bodily frame, and continued bad health. But we will not readily believe that the parent of uncle Toby could be a harsh, or habitually a bad-humoured man. Sterne's letters to his friends, and especially to his daughter, breathe all the fondness of affection; and his resources, such as they were, seem to have been always at the command of those whom he loved.[1]

[1] ["Of the lamentable contrast between sentiments and conduct, which this transfer of the seat of sensibility from the heart to the fancy produces, the annals of literary men afford unluckily too many examples. Alfieri, though he could write a sonnet full of tenderness to his mother, never saw her (says Mr. W. Rose) but once, after their early separation, though he frequently passed within a few miles of her residence. The poet Young, with all his parade of domestic sorrows, was, it appears, a neglectful

If we consider Sterne's reputation as chiefly founded on *Tristram Shandy*, he must be regarded as liable to two severe charges;—those, namely, of indecency, and of affectation. Upon the first accusation Sterne was himself peculiarly sore, and used to justify the licentiousness of his humour by representing it as a mere breach of decorum, which had no perilous consequence to morals. The following anecdote we have from a sure source:—Soon after *Tristram* had appeared, Sterne asked a Yorkshire lady of fortune and condition whether she had read his book. "I have not, Mr. Sterne," was the answer; "and, to be plain with you, I am informed it is not proper for female perusal." "My dear good lady," replied the author, "do not be gulled by such stories; the book is like your young heir there" (pointing to a child of three years old, who was rolling on the carpet in his white tunics), "he shows at times a good deal that is usually concealed, but it is all in perfect innocence!" This witty excuse may be so far admitted; for it cannot be said that the licentious humour of *Tristram Shandy* is of the kind which applies itself to the passions, or is calculated to corrupt society. But it is a sin against taste, if allowed to be harmless as to morals. A handful of mud is neither a firebrand nor a stone; but to fling it about in sport argues coarseness of mind and want of common manners.

Sterne, however, began and ended by braving the censure of the world in this particular. A remarkable passage in one of his letters shows how lightly he was sometimes disposed to treat the charge; and what is singular enough, his plan for turning it into ridicule seems to have been serious.

"Crebillon (*le fils*) has made a convention with me, which if he is not too lazy, will be no bad *persiflage*. As soon as I get to Toulouse, he has agreed to write me an expostulatory letter on the indecencies of T. Shandy—which is to be answered by recrimination upon the liberties in his own works. These are to be printed together—Crebillon against Sterne—Sterne against Crebillon—the copy to be sold, and the money equally divided: this is good Swiss policy."

In like manner, the greatest admirers of Sterne must own that his style is affected, eminently, and in a degree which even his wit and pathos are inadequate to support. The style of Rabelais, which he assumed for his model, is to the highest excess rambling, excursive, and intermingled with the greatest

husband and harsh father; and Sterne (to use the words employed by Lord Byron) preferred 'whining over a dead ass to relieving a living mother.'"—Moore's *Life of Byron*, vol. iii., p. 127 *n.*]

absurdities. But Rabelais was in some measure compelled to adopt this Harlequin's habit, in order that, like licensed jesters, he might, under the cover of his folly, have permission to vent his satire against church and state. Sterne assumed the manner of his master, only as a mode of attracting attention, and of making the public stare; and, therefore, his extravagancies, like those of a feigned madman, are cold and forced even in the midst of his most irregular flights. A man may, in the present day, be, with perfect impunity, as wise or as witty, nay, as satirical, as he can, without assuming the cap and bells of the ancient jester as an apology; and that Sterne chose voluntarily to appear under such a disguise must be set down as mere affectation, and ranked with his unmeaning tricks of black or marbled pages, employed merely *ad captandum vulgus*. All popularity thus founded carries in it the seeds of decay; for eccentricity in composition, like fantastic modes of dress, however attractive when first introduced, is sure to be caricatured by stupid imitators, to become soon unfashionable, and of course to be neglected.

If we proceed to look more closely into the manner of composition which Sterne thought proper to adopt, we find a sure guide in the ingenious Dr. Ferriar of Manchester, who, with most singular patience, has traced our author through the hidden sources whence he borrowed most of his learning, and many of his more striking and peculiar expressions. Rabelais (much less read than spoken of), the lively but licentious miscellany called *Moyen de Parvenir*, and D'Aubigne's *Baron de Fæneste*, with many other forgotten authors of the sixteenth century, were successively laid under contribution. Burton's since celebrated work on Melancholy (which Dr. Ferriar's Essay instantly raised to double price in the book-market) afforded Sterne an endless mass of quotations, with which he unscrupulously garnished his pages, as if they had been collected in the course of his own extensive reading.[1] The style of the same author, together with

[1] ["Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 4to, 1st edition, 1624—8th edition, folio, 1676—9th edition, 2 vols. 8vo, 1800, reprinted from the best folio edition, 1651-2.

"Robert Burton was the younger brother of William Burton, author of the description of Leicestershire; according to Wood, 'he was an exact mathematician, a curious calculator of nativities, a general read scholar, a thorough-paced philologist, and one that well understood the surveying of lands. As he was by many accounted a severe student, a devourer of authors, a melancholy and humorous person, so by others who knew him well, a person of great honesty, plain dealing, and charity. I have often heard some of the ancients of Christ's Church say, that his company was very merry, facete, and juvenile; and no man in his time did surpass him

that of Bishop Hall, furnished the author of *Tristram* with many of those whimsical expressions, similes, and illustrations, which were long believed the genuine effusions of his own eccentric wit. For proofs of this sweeping charge we must refer the reader to Dr. Ferriar's well-known essay, and *Illustrations*, as he delicately terms them, *of Sterne's Writings*; in which it is clearly shown, that he, whose manner and style were so long thought original, was, in fact, the most unhesitating plagiarist who ever cribbed from his predecessors in order to garnish his own pages. It must be owned, at the same time, that Sterne selects the materials of his mosaic work with so much art, places them so well, and polishes them so highly, that in most cases we are disposed to pardon the want of originality, in consideration of the exquisite talent with which the borrowed materials are wrought up into the new form.

One of Sterne's most singular thefts, considering the tenor of the passage stolen, is his declamation against literary depredators of his own class:—

"Shall we," says Sterne, "for ever make new books, as apothecaries make new medicines, by pouring only out of one vessel into another? Are we for ever to be twisting and untwining the same rope—for ever in the same track? for ever at the same pace?"

The words of Burton are:—

"As apothecaries, we make new mixtures, every day pour out of one vessel into another; and as the Romans robbed all the cities in the world to set out their bad-sited Rome, we skim the cream of other men's wits, pick the choice flowers of their tilled gardens, to set out our own sterile plots. We weave the same web, still twist the same rope again and again."

We cannot help wondering at the coolness with which Sterne could transfer to his own work so eloquent a tirade against the very arts which he was practising.

for his ready and dexterous interlarding his common discourses among them with verses from the poets, or sentences from classic authors, which being then all the fashion in the university, made his company the more acceptable.' Burton composed *The Anatomy* with a view of relieving his own melancholy; but increased it to such a degree, that nothing could make him laugh but going to the Bridgefoot, and hearing the ribaldry of the bargemen, which rarely failed to throw him into a violent fit of laughter. His epitaph at Christ Church, in Oxford, intimates that excessive application to this celebrated work, the author's only production, was the occasion of his death. *Paucis notus, paucioribus ignotus, hic jacet Democritus Junior, cui vitam dedit et mortem melancholia.*

"Dr. Johnson was so well pleased with Burton's *Anatomy*, that he declared it was the only book that ever enticed him out of bed two hours earlier than he wished to rise."—Davis's *Olio*, p. 105.]

Much has been said about the right of an author to avail himself of his predecessor's labours; and certainly, in a general sense, he that revives the wit and learning of a former age, and puts it into the form likely to captivate his own, confers a benefit on his contemporaries. But to plume himself with the very language and phrases of former writers, and to pass their wit and learning for his own, was the more unworthy in Sterne, as he had enough of original talent, had he chosen to exert it, to have dispensed with all such acts of literary petty larcency.

Tristram Shandy is no narrative, but a collection of scenes, dialogues, and portraits, humorous or affecting, intermixed with much wit, and with much learning, original or borrowed. It resembles the irregularities of a Gothic room, built by some fanciful collector, to contain the miscellaneous remnants of antiquity which his pains have accumulated, and bearing as little proportion in its parts as there is connection between the pieces of rusty armour with which it is decorated. Viewing it in this light, the principal figure is Mr. Shandy the elder, whose character is formed in many respects upon that of Martinus Scriblerus. The history of Martin was designed by the celebrated club of wits, by whom it was commenced, as a satire upon the ordinary pursuits of learning and science. Sterne, on the contrary, had no particular object of ridicule; his business was only to create a person, to whom he could attach the great quantity of extraordinary reading, and antiquated learning, which he had collected. He, therefore, supposed in Mr. Shandy a man of an active and metaphysical, but at the same time a whimsical cast of mind, whom too much and too miscellaneous learning had brought within a step or two of madness, and who acted in the ordinary affairs of life upon the absurd theories adopted by the pedants of past ages. He is most admirably contrasted with his wife, well described as a good lady of the true poco-curante school, who neither obstructed the progress of her husband's *hobbyhorse*, to use a phrase which Sterne has rendered classical, nor could be prevailed upon to spare him the least admiration for the grace and dexterity with which he managed it.

Yorick the lively, witty, sensitive, and heedless parson, is the well-known personification of Sterne himself, and undoubtedly, like every portrait of himself drawn by a master of the art, bore a strong resemblance to the original. Still, however, there are shades of simplicity thrown into the character of Yorick, which did not exist in that of Sterne. We cannot believe that the jests of the latter were so void of malice prepense, or that his

satire flowed entirely out of honesty of mind and mere jocundity of humour. It must be owned, moreover, that Sterne was more like to have stolen a passage out of Stevinus, if he could have found one to his purpose, than to have left one of his manuscripts in the volume, with the careless indifference of Yorick. Still, however, we gladly recognise the general likeness between the author and the child of his fancy, and willingly pardon the pencil which, in the delicate task of self-delineation, has softened some traits of his own features and improved others.

Uncle Toby and his faithful squire, the most delightful characters in the work, or perhaps in any other, are drawn with such a pleasing force and discrimination that they more than entitle the author to a free pardon for his literary peculations, his indecorum, and his affectation; nay, authorise him to leave the court of criticism not forgiven only, but applauded and rewarded as one who has exalted and honoured humanity, and impressed upon his readers such a lively picture of kindness and benevolence, blended with courage, gallantry, and simplicity, that their hearts must be warmed whenever it is recalled to memory. Sterne, indeed, might boldly plead in his own behalf, that the passages which he borrowed from others were of little value, in comparison to those which are exclusively original; and that the former might have been written by many persons, while in his own proper line he stands alone and inimitable. Something of extravagance may, perhaps, attach to Uncle Toby's favourite amusements. Yet in England, where men think and act with little regard to ridicule or censure of their neighbours, there is no impossibility, perhaps no great improbability in supposing that a humorist might employ such a mechanical aid as my Uncle's bowling-green, in order to encourage and assist his imagination in the pleasing but delusive task of castle-building. Men have been called children of larger growth, and among the antic toys and devices with which they are amused, the device of my Uncle, with whose pleasures we are so much disposed to sympathise, does not seem so unnatural upon reflection as it may appear at first sight.

It is well known (through Dr. Ferriar's labours) that Dr. Slop, with all his obstetrical engines, may be identified with Dr. Burton of York, who published a Treatise of Midwifery in 1751. This person, as we have elsewhere noticed, was on bad terms with Sterne's uncle; and though there had come strife and unkindness between the uncle and the nephew, yet the latter seems to have retained aversion against the enemy of the former. But

Sterne, being no politician, had forgiven the Jacobite, and only persecutes the doctor with his raillery as a quack and a Catholic.

It is needless to dwell longer on a work so generally known. The style employed by Sterne is fancifully ornamented, but at the same time vigorous and masculine, and full of that animation and force which can only be derived by an intimate acquaintance with the early English prose-writers. In the power of approaching and touching the finer feelings of the heart, he has never been excelled, if indeed he has ever been equalled; and may be at once recorded as one of the most affected, and one of the most simple writers—as one of the greatest plagiarists, and one of the most original geniuses, whom England has produced. Dr. Ferriar, who seemed born to trace and detect the various mazes through which Sterne carried on his depredations upon ancient and dusty authors, apologises for the rigour of his inquest, by doing justice to those merits which were peculiarly our author's own. W cannot better close this article than with the sonnet in which his ingenious inquisitor makes the amende honourable to the shade of Yorick.

"Sterne, for whose sake I plod through miry ways
Of antique wit and quibbling mazes drear,
Let not thy shade malignant censure fear,
Though aught of borrowed mirth my search betrays.
Long slept that mirth in dust of ancient days
(Erewhile to Guise or wanton Valois dear);
Till waked by thee in Skelton's joyous pile,
She flung on Tristram her capricious rays;
But the quick tear that checks our wondering smile,
In sudden pause or unexpected story,
Owns thy true mastery—and Le Fevre's woes,
Maria's wanderings, and the Prisoner's throes,
Fix thee conspicuous on the throne of glory."

HORACE WALPOLE

THE *Castle of Otranto* is remarkable, not only for the wild interest of the story, but as the first modern attempt to found a tale of amusing fiction upon the basis of the ancient romances of chivalry. The neglect and discredit of these venerable legends had commenced so early as the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when, as we learn from the criticism of the times, Spenser's fairy web was approved rather on account of the mystic and allegorical interpretation, than the plain and obvious meaning of his chivalrous pageant. The drama, which shortly afterwards rose into splendour, and English versions from the innumerable novelists of Italy supplied to the higher class the amusement which their fathers received from the legends of Don Belianis and the Mirror of Knighthood; and the huge volumes, which were once the pastime of nobles and princes, shorn of their ornaments, and shrunk into abridgments, were banished to the kitchen or nursery, or, at best, to the hall-window of the old-fashioned country manor-house. Under Charles II., the prevailing taste for French literature dictated the introduction of those dullest of dull folios, the romances of Calprenede and Scuderi, works which hover between the ancient tale of chivalry and the modern novel. The alliance was so ill conceived that these ponderous tomes retained all the insufferable length and breadth of the prose volumes of chivalry, the same detailed account of reiterated and unvaried combats, the same unnatural and extravagant turn of incident, without the rich and sublime strokes of genius, and vigour of imagination, which often distinguished the early romance; while they exhibited all the unnatural metaphysical jargon, sentimental languor, and flat love-intrigue of the novel, without being enlivened by its variety of character, just traits of feeling, or acute views of life. Such an ill-imagined species of composition retained its ground longer than might have been expected, only because these romances were called works of entertainment, and that there was nothing better to supply their room. Even in the days of the *Spectator*, *Clelia*, *Cleopatra*, and the *Grand Cyrus* (as that precious folio is christened by its butcherly translator), were the favourite closet companions of the fair sex. But this unnatural taste began to give way early in the eighteenth century; and, about the middle

of it, was entirely superseded by the works of Le Sage, Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett; so that even the very name of romance, now so venerable in the ear of antiquaries and book-collectors, was almost forgotten at the time *The Castle of Otranto* made its first appearance.

The peculiar situation of Horace Walpole, the ingenious author of this work, was such as gave him a decided predilection for what may be called the Gothic style, a term which he contributed not a little to rescue from the bad fame into which it had fallen, being currently used before his time to express whatever was in pointed and diametrical opposition to the rules of true taste.

Horace Walpole, it is needless to remind the reader, was the son of Sir Robert Walpole, that celebrated minister who held the reins of government under two successive monarchs, with a grasp so firm and uncontrolled that his power seemed entwined with the rights of the Brunswick family. Horace was born in the year 1716-17; was educated at Eton, and formed, at that celebrated seminary, a school-boy acquaintance with the celebrated Gray, which continued during the earlier part of their residence together at Cambridge, so that they became fellow-travellers by joint consent in 1739. They disagreed and parted on the continent; the youthful vivacity, and, perhaps, the aristocratic assumption of Walpole, not agreeing with the somewhat formal opinions and habits of the professed man of letters.[1] In the reconciliation afterwards effected between them, Walpole frankly took on himself the blame of the rupture, and they continued friends until Gray's death.

[1] ["At Reggio arose an unfortunate dispute, which ended in their sudden separation; and of this dispute and separation Mr. Walpole was afterwards content to bear the blame. He represents, as the cause of the quarrel, that Gray was 'too serious a companion' for him. 'Gray,' he says, 'was for antiquities, etc., while I was for perpetual balls and plays; the fault was mine.' The difference of temper here mentioned has been already hinted at, and had probably, for a considerable time, been preparing the mind of both parties for the crisis of a rupture. Walpole was vain, and had early been accustomed to flattery; Gray was no courtier, and might, on his part, have betrayed something of discontent at being so long dependent, in his own movements, on those of another. But for information on the immediate cause of this quarrel, we are indebted to Mr. Mitford, who states, on what would claim to be considered good authority, that Mr. Walpole, suspecting Gray of having spoken ill of him to his friends in England, clandestinely opened a letter of his and re-sealed it, an injury which Mr. Gray very properly resented. If anything could add to the meanness of such an action, it was the cowardly manner in which it is slurred over in Mr. Walpole's general acknowledgment of blame, and that too, as though he thought the world, judging by its own maxims, would readily acquit him." —*Life and Works of Gray*, vol. i., p. 28.]

When Walpole returned to England, he obtained a seat in Parliament, and entered public life as the son of a prime minister as powerful as England had known for more than a century. When the father occupied such a situation, his sons had necessarily their full share of that court which is usually paid to the near connections of those who have the patronage of the state at their disposal. To the feeling of importance inseparable from the object of such attention was added the early habit of connecting and associating the interest of Sir Robert Walpole, and even the domestic affairs of his family, with the parties in the Royal Family of England, and with the changes in the public affairs of Europe. It is not therefore wonderful that the turn of Horace Walpole's mind, which was naturally tinged with the love of pedigree, and a value for family honours, should have been strengthened in that bias by circumstances, which seemed, as it were, to implicate the fate of his own house with that of princes, and to give the shields of the Walpoles, Shorters, and Robsarts, from whom he descended, an added dignity, unknown to their original owners. If Mr. Walpole ever founded hopes of raising himself to political eminence, and turning his family importance to advantage in his career, the termination of his father's power, and the personal change with which he felt it attended, disgusted him with active life, and early consigned him to literary retirement. He had, indeed, a seat in Parliament for many years; but, unless upon one occasion when he vindicated the memory of his father with great dignity and eloquence, he took no share in the debates of the House, and not much interest in the parties which maintained them. Indeed, in the account which he has himself rendered us of his own views and dispositions with respect to state affairs, he seems rather to have been bent on influencing party spirit, and bustling in public affairs, for the sake of embroilment and intrigue, than in order to carry any particular measure, whether important to himself, or of consequence to the state. In the year 1758, and at the active age of forty-one, secured from the caprices of fortune, he retired altogether from public life, to enjoy his own pursuits and studies in retirement. His father's care had invested him with three good sinecure offices, so that his income, managed with economy, which no one understood better how to practise, was sufficient for his expense in matters of virtu, as well as for maintaining his high rank in society.

The subjects of Horace Walpole's studies were, in a great measure, dictated by his habits of thinking and feeling operating

upon an animated imagination, and a mind, acute, active, penetrating, and fraught with a great variety of miscellaneous knowledge. Travelling had formed his taste for the fine arts; but his early predilection in favour of birth and rank connected even those branches of study with that of Gothic history and antiquities. His *Anecdotes of Painting and Engraving* evince many marks of his favourite pursuits; but his *Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors*, and his *Historical Doubts*, we owe entirely to his pursuits as an antiquary and genealogist. The former work evinces, in a particular degree, Mr. Walpole's respect for birth and rank; yet is, perhaps, ill calculated to gain much sympathy for either. It would be difficult, by any process or principle of subdivision, to select a list of as many plebeian authors, containing so very few whose genius was worthy of commemoration; but it was always Walpole's foible to disclaim a professed pursuit of public favour, for which, however, he earnestly thirsted, and to hold himself forth as a privileged author, "one of the right-hand file," who did not mean to descend into the common arena, where professional authors contend before the public eye, but wrote merely to gratify his own taste, by throwing away a few idle hours on literary composition. There was much affectation in this, which accordingly met the reward which affectation usually incurs; as Walpole seems to have suffered a good deal from the criticism which he affected to despise, and occasionally from the neglect which he appeared to court.

The *Historical Doubts* are an acute and curious example how minute antiquarian research may shake our faith in the facts most pointedly averred by general history. It is remarkable also to observe, how, in defending a system which was probably at first adopted as a mere literary exercise, Mr. Walpole's doubts acquired, in his own eyes, the respectability of certainties, in which he could not brook controversy.

Mr. Walpole's domestic occupations, as well as his studies, bore evidence of a taste for English antiquities, which was then uncommon. He loved, as a satirist has expressed it, "to gaze on Gothic toys through Gothic glass;" and the villa at Strawberry Hill, which he chose for his abode, gradually swelled into a feudal castle, by the addition of turrets, towers, galleries, and corridors, whose fretted roofs, carved panels, and illuminated windows, were garnished with the appropriate furniture of scutcheons, armorial bearings, shields, tilting lances, and all the panoply of chivalry. The Gothic order of architecture is now so generally, and, indeed, indiscriminately used, that we are

rather surprised if the country-house of a tradesman retired from business does not exhibit lanceolated windows, divided by stone shafts, and garnished by painted glass, a cupboard in the form of a cathedral stall, and a pig-house with a front borrowed from the façade of an ancient chapel. But, in the middle of the eighteenth century, when Mr. Walpole began to exhibit specimens of the Gothic style, and to show how patterns, collected from cathedrals and monuments, might be applied to chimney-pieces, ceilings, windows, and balustrades, he did not comply with the dictates of a prevailing fashion, but pleased his own taste, and realised his own visions, in the romantic cast of the mansion which he erected.

Mr. Walpole's lighter studies were conducted upon the same principle which influenced his historical researches, and his taste in architecture. His extensive acquaintance with foreign literature, in which he justly prided himself, was subordinate to his pursuits as an English antiquary and genealogist, in which he gleaned subjects for poetry and for romantic fiction, as well as for historical controversy. These are studies, indeed, proverbially dull; but it is only when they are pursued by those whose fancies nothing can enliven. A Horace Walpole, or a Thomas Warton, is not a mere collector of dry and minute facts, which the general historian passes over with disdain. He brings with him the torch of genius, to illuminate the ruins through which he loves to wander; nor does the classic scholar derive more inspiration from the pages of Virgil than such an antiquary from the glowing, rich, and powerful feudal painting of Froissart. His mind being thus stored with information, accumulated by researches into the antiquities of the middle ages, and inspired, as he himself informs us, by the romantic cast of his own habitation, Mr. Walpole resolved to give the public a specimen of the Gothic style adapted to modern literature, as he had already exhibited its application to modern architecture.

As, in his model of a Gothic modern mansion, our author had studiously endeavoured to fit to the purposes of modern convenience, or luxury, the rich, varied, and complicated tracery and carving of the ancient cathedral, so, in *The Castle of Otranto*, it was his object to unite the marvellous turn of incident, and imposing tone of chivalry, exhibited in the ancient romance, with that accurate display of human character, and contrast of feelings and passions, which is, or ought to be, delineated in the modern novel. But Mr. Walpole, being uncertain of the reception which a work upon so new a plan might experience

from the world, and not caring, perhaps, to encounter the ridicule which would have attended its failure, *The Castle of Otranto* was, in 1764, ushered into the world, as a translation, by Willliam Marshall, from the Italian of Onuphrio Muralto, a sort of anagram, or translation, of the author's own name. It did not, however, long impose upon the critics of the day. It was soon suspected to proceed from a more elegant pen than that of any William Marshall, and, in the second edition, Walpole disclosed the secret. In a private letter, he gave the following account of the origin of the composition, in which he contradicts the ordinary assertion that it was completed in eight days.

"*9th March*, 1763.

"Shall I confess to you what was the origin of this romance? I waked one morning in the beginning of last June from a dream, of which all I could recover was, that I had thought myself in an ancient castle (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story), and that on the uppermost bannister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening I sat down and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate. The work grew on my hands, and I grew fond of it. Add, that I was very glad to think of anything rather than politics. In short, I was so engrossed with my tale, which I completed in less than two months, that one evening I wrote from the time I had drank my tea, about six o'clock, till half an hour after one in the morning, when my hands and fingers were so weary, that I could not hold the pen to finish the sentence, but left Matilda and Isabella talking in the middle of a paragraph."

It does not seem that the authenticity of the narrative was at first suspected. Mr. Gray writes to Mr. Walpole, on 30th December, 1764:—

"I have received *The Castle of Otranto*, and return you my thanks for it. It engages our attention here (*i.e.* at Cambridge), makes some of us cry a little; and all, in general, afraid to go to bed o' nights. We take it for a translation; and should believe it to be a true story, if it were not for St. Nicholas.'

The friends of the author, as appears from the letter already quoted, were probably soon permitted to peep beneath the veil he had thought proper to assume; and, in the second edition, it was altogether withdrawn by a preface, in which the tendency and nature of the work are shortly commented upon and explained. From the following passage, translated from a letter by the author to Madame Deffand, it would seem that he repented of having laid aside his incognito; and sensitive to criticism, like most dilletante authors, was rather more hurt

by the raillery of those who liked not his tale of chivalry, than gratified by the applause of his admirers.

"So they have translated my *Castle of Otranto*, probably in ridicule of the author. So be it;—however, I beg you will let their raillery pass in silence. Let the critics have their own way; they give me no uneasiness. I have not written the book for the present age, which will endure nothing but *cold common sense*. I confess to you, my dear friend (and you will think me madder than ever), that this is the only one of my works with which I am myself pleased; I have given reins to my imagination till I became on fire with the visions and feelings which it excited. I have composed it in defiance of rules, of critics, and of philosophers; and it seems to me just so much the better for that very reason. I am even persuaded, that some time hereafter, when taste shall resume the place which philosophy now occupies, my poor *Castle* will find admirers; we have actually a few among us already, for I am just publishing the third edition. I do not say this in order to mendicate your approbation.[1] I told you from the beginning you would not like the book—your visions are all in a different style. I am not sorry that the translator has given the Second Preface; the first, however, accords best with the style of the fiction. I wished it to be believed ancient, and almost everybody was imposed upon."

If the public applause, however, was sufficiently qualified by the voice of censure to alarm the feelings of the author, the continued demand for various editions of *The Castle of Otranto* showed how high the work really stood in popular estimation, and probably eventually reconciled Mr. Walpole to the taste of his own age. This romance has been justly considered not only as the original and model of a peculiar species of composition, attempted and successfully executed by a man of great genius, but as one of the standard works of our lighter literature.

Horace Walpole continued the mode of life which he had adopted so early as 1753 until his death, unless it may be considered as an alteration that his sentiments of Whiggism, which, he himself assures us, almost amounted to Republicanism, received a shock from the French Revolution, which he appears from its commencement to have thoroughly detested. The tenor of his life could be hardly said to suffer interruption by his father's earldom of Orford devolving upon him when he had reached his 74th year, by the death of his nephew. He scarce assumed the title, and died a few years after it had descended to him, 2nd March, 1797, at his house in Berkeley Square.

[1] Madame Deffand had mentioned having read *The Castle of Otranto* twice over; but she did not add a word of approbation. She blamed the translator for giving the second preface, chiefly because she thought it might commit Walpole with Voltaire.

While these sheets are passing through the press, we have found in Miss Hawkins's very entertaining reminiscences of her early abode at Twickenham the following description of the person of Horace Walpole, before 1772, giving us the most lively idea of the person and manners of a Man of Fashion about the middle of the last century:—

"His figure was not merely tall, but more properly long and slender to excess; his complexion, and particularly his hands, of a most unhealthy paleness. His eyes were remarkably bright and penetrating, very dark and lively: his voice was not strong, but his tones were extremely pleasant, and, if I may so say, highly gentlemanly. I do not remember his common gait; he always entered a room in that style of affected delicacy, which fashion had then made almost natural; *chapeau bras* between his hands, as if he wished to compress it, or under his arm; knees bent, and feet on tiptoe, as if afraid of a wet floor. His dress in visiting was most usually, in summer, when I most saw him, a lavender suit, the waistcoat embroidered with a little silver, or of white silk worked in the tambour, partridge silk stockings, and gold buckles, ruffles and frill generally lace. I remember, when a child, thinking him very much under-dressed, if at any time, except in mourning, he wore hemmed cambric. In summer no powder, but his wig combed straight, and showing his very smooth, pale forehead, and queued behind; in winter, powder."

We cannot help thinking that this most respectable lady, by whose communications respecting eminent individuals the public has been so much obliged, has been a little too severe on the Gothic whims of the architecture at Strawberry Hill. The admirers of the fine arts should have forbearance for each other, when their fervent admiration of a favourite pursuit leads them into those extremes which are caviar to the multitude. And as the ear of the architect should not be hasty to condemn the over-learned conceits of the musician, so the eye of the musician should have some toleration for the turrets and pinnacles of the fascinated builder.

It is foreign to our plan to say much of Horace Walpole's individual character. His works bear evidence to his talents; and, even striking out the horribly impressive but disgusting drama of *The Mysterious Mother*, and the excellent romance which we are about to analyse more critically, they must leave him the reputation of a man of excellent taste, and certainly of being the best letter-writer in the English language.

In private life, his temper appears to have been precarious; and though expensive in indulging his own taste, he always seems to have done so on the most economical terms possible.

He is often, in his epistolary correspondence, harsh and unkind to Madame Deffand, whose talents, her blindness, and her enthusiastic affection for him, claimed every indulgence from a warm-hearted man. He is also severe and rigid towards Bentley, whose taste and talents he had put into continual requisition for the ornaments of his house.[1] These are unamiable traits of character, and they have been quoted often, and exaggerated much. But his memory has suffered most on account of his conduct towards Chatterton, in which we have always thought he was perfectly defensible. That unhappy son of genius endeavoured to impose upon Walpole a few stanzas of very inferior merit, as ancient; and sent him an equally gross and palpable imposture under the shape of a pretended List of Painters. Walpole's sole crime lies in not patronising at once a young man, who only appeared before him in the character of a very inartificial impostor, though he afterwards proved himself a gigantic one. The fate of Chatterton lies, not at the door of Walpole, but of the public at large, who, two years (we believe) afterwards, were possessed of the splendid proofs of his natural powers, and any one of whom was as much called upon as Walpole to prevent the most unhappy catastrophe.

Finally, it must be recorded to Walpole's praise that, though not habitually liberal, he was strictly just, and readily parted with that portion of his income which the necessities of the state required. He may, perhaps, have mistaken his character when he assumes as its principal characteristic, "disinterestedness and contempt of money," which, he intimates, was with him less "a virtue than a passion." But by the generous and apparently most sincere offer to divide his whole income with Marshal Conway, he showed that, if there existed in his bosom more love of money than perhaps he was himself aware of, it was subjugated to the influence of the nobler virtues and feelings.

We are now to offer a few remarks on *The Castle of Otranto*, and on the class of compositions to which it belongs, and of which it was the precursor.

It is doing injustice to Mr. Walpole's memory to allege that all which he aimed at in *The Castle of Otranto* was "the art of exciting surprise and horror;" or, in other words, the appeal to that secret and reserved feeling of love for the marvellous and supernatural, which occupies a hidden corner in almost every

[1] [Mr. Bentley, the son of the famous Doctor, and the author of *The Wishes*. See particulars respecting him in the Memoirs of his nephew, Mr. Cumberland.]

one's bosom. Were this all which he had attempted, the means by which he sought to attain his purpose might, with justice, be termed both clumsy and puerile. But Mr. Walpole's purpose was both more difficult of attainment, and more important when attained. It was his object to draw such a picture of domestic life and manners, during the feudal times, as might actually have existed, and to paint it checkered and agitated by the action of supernatural machinery, such as the superstition of the period received as matter of devout credulity. The natural parts of the narrative are so contrived, that they associate themselves with the marvellous occurrences; and, by the force of that association, render those *speciosa miracula* striking and impressive, though our cooler reason admits their impossibility. Indeed, to produce, in a well-cultivated mind, any portion of that surprise and fear which are founded on supernatural events, the frame and tenor of the whole story must be adjusted in perfect harmony with this main-spring of the interest. He who, in early youth, has happened to pass a solitary night in one of the few ancient mansions which the fashion of more modern times has left undespoiled of their original furniture, has probably experienced that the gigantic and preposterous figures dimly visible in the defaced tapestry—the remote clang of the distant doors which divide him from living society—the deep darkness which involves the high and fretted roof of the apartment—the dimly-seen pictures of ancient knights, renowned for their valour, and perhaps for their crimes—the varied and indistinct sounds which disturb the silent desolation of a half-deserted mansion—and, to crown all, the feeling that carries us back to ages of feudal power and papal superstition, join together to excite a corresponding sensation of supernatural awe, if not of terror. It is in such situations, when superstition becomes contagious, that we listen with respect, and even with dread, to the legends which are our sport in the garish light of sunshine, and amid the dissipating sights and sounds of everyday life. Now, it seems to have been Walpole's object to attain, by the minute accuracy of a fable, sketched with singular attention to the costume of the period in which the scene was laid, that same association, which might prepare his reader's mind for the reception of prodigies congenial to the creed and feelings of the actors. His feudal tyrant, his distressed damsel, his resigned yet dignified churchman—the Castle itself, with its feudal arrangements of dungeons, trap-doors, oratories, and galleries—the incidents of the trial, the chivalrous procession, and the combat;—in short, the scene,

the performers, and action, so far as it is natural, form the accompaniments of his spectres and his miracles, and have the same effect on the mind of the reader that the appearance and drapery of such a chamber as we have described may produce upon that of a temporary inmate. This was a task which required no little learning, no ordinary degree of fancy, no common portion of genius, to execute. The association of which we have spoken is of a nature peculiarly delicate, and subject to be broken and disarranged. It is, for instance, almost impossible to build such a modern Gothic structure as shall impress us with the feelings we have endeavoured to describe. It may be grand, or it may be gloomy; it may excite magnificent or melancholy ideas; but it must fail in bringing forth the sensation of supernatural awe, connected with halls that have echoed to the sounds of remote generations, and have been pressed by the footsteps of those who have long since passed away. Yet Horace Walpole has attained in composition, what, as an architect, he must have felt beyond the power of his art. The remote and superstitious period in which his scene is laid—the art with which he has furnished forth its Gothic decorations—the sustained, and, in general, the dignified tone of feudal manners—prepare us gradually for the favourable reception of prodigies, which, though they could not really have happened at any period, were consistent with the belief of all mankind at that in which the action is placed. It was, therefore, the author's object, not merely to excite surprise and terror by the introduction of supernatural agency, but to wind up the feelings of his reader till they became for a moment identified with those of a ruder age, which

> "Held each strange tale devoutly true."

The difficulty of attaining this nice accuracy of delineation may be best estimated by comparing *The Castle of Otranto* with the less successful efforts of later writers; where, amid all their attempts to assume the tone of antique chivalry, something occurs in every chapter so decidedly incongruous, as at once reminds us of an ill-sustained masquerade, in which ghosts, knights-errant, magicians, and damsels gent, are all equipped in hired dresses from the same warehouse in Tavistock Street.

There is a remarkable particular in which Mr. Walpole's steps have been departed from by the most distinguished of his followers.

Romantic narrative is of two kinds—that which, being in

itself possible, may be matter of belief at any period; and that which, though held impossible by more enlightened ages, was yet consonant with the faith of earlier times. The subject of *The Castle of Otranto* is of the latter class. Mrs. Radcliffe, a name not to be mentioned without the high respect due to genius, has endeavoured to effect a compromise between those different styles of narrative, by referring her prodigies to an explanation founded on natural causes, in the latter chapters of her romances. To this improvement upon the Gothic romance there are so many objections that we own ourselves inclined to prefer, as more simple and impressive, the narrative of Walpole, which details supernatural incidents as they would have been readily believed and received in the eleventh or twelfth century. In the first place, the reader feels indignant at discovering that he has been cheated into sympathy with terrors, which are finally explained as having proceeded from some very simple cause; and the interest of a second reading is entirely destroyed by his having been admitted behind the scenes at the conclusion of the first. Secondly, the precaution of relieving our spirits from the influence of supposed supernatural terror, seems as unnecessary in a work of professed fiction, as that of the prudent Bottom, who proposed that the human face of the representative of his lion should appear from under his masque, and acquaint the audience plainly that he was a man as other men, and nothing more than Snug the joiner. Lastly, These substitutes for supernatural agency are frequently to the full as improbable as the machinery which they are introduced to explain away and to supplant. The reader, who is required to admit the belief of supernatural interference, understands precisely what is demanded of him; and, if he be truly a gentle reader, throws his mind into the attitude best adapted to humour the deceit which is presented for his entertainment, and grants, for the time of perusal, the premises on which the fable depends.[1] But if the author voluntarily binds himself to account for all the wondrous occurrences which he introduces, we are entitled to exact that the explanation shall be natural, easy, ingenious, and complete. Every reader of such works must remember instances, in which the explanation of mysterious circumstances in the narrative has proved equally, nay, even more incredible, than if they had been accounted for by the agency of super-

[1] There are instances to the contrary, however. For example, that stern votary of severe truth, who cast aside *Gulliver's Travels* as containing a parcel of improbable fictions.

natural beings; for the most incredulous must allow that the interference of such agency is more possible than that an effect resembling it should be produced by an utterly inadequate cause. But it is unnecessary to enlarge farther on a part of the subject which we have only mentioned to exculpate our author from the charge of using machinery more clumsy than his tale from its nature required. The bold assertion of the actual existence of phantoms and apparitions seems to us to harmonise much more naturally with the manners of ancient times, and to produce a more powerful effect upon the reader's mind, than any attempt to reconcile the superstitious credulity of feudal ages with the philosophic scepticism of our own, by referring those prodigies to the operation of fulminating powder, combined mirrors, magic lanterns, trapdoors, speaking-trumpets, and such-like apparatus of German phantasmagoria.

It cannot, however, be denied that the character of the supernatural machinery in *The Castle of Otranto* is liable to objections. Its action and interference is rather too frequent, and presses too hard and constantly upon the same feelings in the reader's mind, to the hazard of diminishing the elasticity of the spring upon which it should operate. The fund of fearful sympathy which can be afforded by a modern reader to a tale of wonder is much diminished by the present habits of life and modes of education. Our ancestors could wonder and thrill through all the mazes of an interminable metrical romance of fairy land, and of an enchantment, the work perhaps of some

> "Prevailing poet whose undoubting mind
> Believed the magic wonders which he sung."

But our own habits and feelings and belief are different, and a transient, though vivid impression, is all that can be excited by a tale of wonder, even in the most fanciful mind of the present day. By the too frequent recurrence of his prodigies, Mr. Walpole ran, perhaps, his greatest risk of awakening *la raison froide*, that "cold common sense" which he justly deemed the greatest enemy of the effect which he hoped to produce. It may be added also, that the supernatural occurrences of *The Castle of Otranto* are brought forward into too strong daylight, and marked by an over degree of distinctness and accuracy of outline. A mysterious obscurity seems congenial at least, if not essential, to our ideas of disembodied spirits; and the gigantic limbs of the ghost of Alphonso, as described by the terrified domestics, are somewhat too distinct and corporeal to produce

the feelings which their appearance is intended to excite. This fault, however, if it be one, is more than compensated by the high merit of many of the marvellous incidents in the romance. The descent of the picture of Manfred's ancestor, although it borders on extravagance, is finely introduced, and interrupts an interesting dialogue with striking effect. We have heard it observed that the animated figure should rather have been a statue than a picture. We greatly doubt the justice of the criticism. The advantages of the colouring induce us decidedly to prefer Mr. Walpole's fiction to the proposed substitute. There are few who have not felt, at some period of their childhood, a sort of terror from the manner in which the eye of an ancient portrait appears to fix that of the spectator from every point of view. It is, perhaps, hypercritical to remark (what, however, Walpole of all authors might have been expected to attend to), that the time assigned to the action, being about the eleventh century, is rather too early for the introduction of a full-length portrait. The apparition of the skeleton hermit to the Prince of Vicenza was long accounted a masterpiece of the horrible; but of late the valley of Jehosaphat could hardly supply the dry bones necessary for the exhibition of similar spectres, so that injudicious and repeated imitation has, in some degree, injured the effect of its original model. What is more striking in *The Castle of Otranto* is the manner in which the various prodigious appearances, bearing each upon the other, and all upon the accomplishment of the ancient prophecy, denouncing the ruin of the house of Manfred, gradually prepare us for the grand catastrophe. The moonlight vision of Alphonso dilated to immense magnitude, the astonished group of spectators in the front, and the shattered ruins of the castle in the background, are briefly and sublimely described. We know no passage of similar merit, unless it be the apparition of Fadzean, or Fadoun, in an ancient Scottish poem.[1]

That part of the romance which depends upon human feelings and agency is conducted with the dramatic talent which afterwards was so conspicuous in *The Mysterious Mother*. The

[1] This spectre, the ghost of a fellower whom he had slain upon suspicion of treachery, appeared to no less a person than Wallace, the champion of Scotland, in the ancient castle of Gask Hall. See Ellis's *Specimens*, vol. i.—[" In the first book of *The Jerusalem of Lope de Vega*, there is an incident like a very remarkable one in the *Castle of Otranto;* the picture of Norandine stalks from its panel, and addresses Saladine; the resemblance may be merely accidental, but if Horace Walpole had looked at the beginning of the poem, it is the first thing which he would have found there."—*Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1817.

persons are indeed rather generic than individual; but this was in a degree necessary to a plan calculated rather to exhibit a general view of society and manners during the times which the author's imagination loved to contemplate than the most minute shades and discriminating points of particular characters. But the actors in the romance are strikingly drawn, with bold outlines becoming the age and nature of the story. Feudal tyranny was, perhaps, never better exemplified than in the character of Manfred. He has the courage, the art, the duplicity, the ambition, of a barbarous chieftain of the dark ages, yet with touches of remorse and natural feeling, which preserve some sympathy for him when his pride is quelled, and his race extinguished. The pious Monk and the patient Hippolita are well contrasted with this selfish and tyrannical prince. Theodore is the juvenile hero of a romantic tale, and Matilda has more interesting sweetness than usually belongs to its heroine. As the character of Isabella is studiously kept down, in order to relieve that of the daughter of Manfred, few readers are pleased with the concluding insinuation, that she became at length the bride of Theodore. This is in some degree a departure from the rules of chivalry; and, however natural an occurrence in common life, rather injures the magic illusions of romance. In other respects, making an allowance for the extraordinary incidents of a dark and tempestuous age, the story, so far as within the course of natural events, is happily detailed, its progress is uniform, its events interesting and well combined, and the conclusion grand, tragical, and affecting.

The style of *The Castle of Otranto* is pure and correct English of the earlier and more classical standard. Mr. Walpole rejected, upon taste and principle, those heavy though powerful auxiliaries which Dr. Johnson imported from the Latin language, and which have since proved to many a luckless wight, who has essayed to use them, as unmanageable as the gauntlets of Eryx,

> ——————et pondus et ipsa
> Huc illuc vinclorum immensa volumina versat.

Neither does the purity of Mr. Walpole's language, and the simplicity of his narrative, admit that luxuriant, florid, and high-varnished landscape painting, with which Mrs. Radcliffe often adorned, and not unfrequently encumbered, her kindred romances. Description, for its own sake, is scarcely once attempted in *The Castle of Otranto;* and if authors would consider how very much this restriction tends to realise narrative, they

might be tempted to abridge at least the showy and wordy exuberance of a style fitter for poetry than prose. It is for the dialogue that Walpole reserves his strength; and it is remarkable how, while conducting his mortal agents with all the art of a modern dramatist, he adheres to the sustained tone of chivalry, which marks the period of the action. This is not attained by patching his narrative or dialogue with glossarial terms, or antique phraseology, but by taking care to exclude all that can awaken modern associations. In the one case his romance would have resembled a modern dress, preposterously decorated with antique ornaments; in its present shape, he has retained the form of the ancient armour, but not its rust and cobwebs. In illustration of what is above stated, we refer the reader to the first interview of Manfred with the Prince of Vicenza, where the manners and language of chivalry are finely painted, as well as the perturbation of conscious guilt, confusing itself in attempted exculpation, even before a mute accuser. The characters of the inferior domestics have been considered as not bearing a proportion sufficiently dignified to the rest of the story. But this is a point on which the author has pleaded his own cause fully in the original prefaces.

We have only to add, in conclusion to these desultory remarks, that if Horace Walpole, who led the way in this new species of literary composition, has been surpassed by some of his followers in diffuse brilliancy of description, and perhaps in the art of detaining the mind of the reader in a state of feverish and anxious suspense, through a protracted and complicated narrative, more will yet remain with him than the single merit of originality and invention. The applause due to chastity and precision of style—to a happy combination of supernatural agency with human interest—to a tone of feudal manners and language, sustained by characters strongly drawn and well discriminated—and to unity of action, producing scenes alternately of interest and of grandeur—the applause, in fine, which cannot be denied to him who can excite the passions of fear and of pity, must be awarded to the author of *The Castle of Otranto*.[1]

[1] [The reader is referred to Mr. D'Israeli's *Calamities of Authors* for a variety of piquant details respecting Lord Orford's literary and personal character; as also to the *Quarterly Review*, on his posthumous *Memoirs of the last Ten Years of George II.*; and a brilliant article in the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1834, on his *Letters to Sir Horace Mann*, edited in 1833 by the late Lord Dover. There are also various interesting passages concerning Walpole in Byron's Letters and Diaries. Lord B. in one place lauds him as the author of the last English Tragedy, and the first English Romance.]

CLARA REEVE

Clara Reeve, the ingenious authoress of *The Old English Baron*, was the daughter of the Reverend William Reeve, M.A., Rector of Freston, and of Kerton, in Suffolk, and perpetual Curate of Saint Nicholas. Her grandfather was the Reverend Thomas Reeve, Rector of Storeham Aspal, and afterwards of St. Mary Stoke, in Ipswich, where the family had been long resident, and enjoyed the rights of free burghers. Miss Reeve's mother's maiden name was Smithies, daughter of —— Smithies, goldsmith and jeweller to King George I.

In a letter to a friend, Mrs. Reeve thus speaks of her father: "My father was an old Whig; from him I have learned all that I know; he was my oracle; he used to make me read the Parliamentary debates while he smoked his pipe after supper. I gaped and yawned over them at the time, but, unawares to myself, they fixed my principles once and for ever. He made me read Rapin's *History of England;* the information it gave made amends for its dryness. I read *Cato's Letters*, by Trenchard and Gordon; I read the Greek and Roman Histories, and *Plutarch's Lives*—all these at an age when few people of either sex can read their names."

The Reverend Mr. Reeve, himself one of a family of eight children, had the same numerous succession; and it is therefore likely that it was rather Clara's strong natural turn for study than any degree of exclusive care which his partiality bestowed that enabled her to acquire such a stock of early information. After his death, his widow resided in Colchester with three of their daughters; and it was here that Miss Clara Reeve first became an authoress, by translating from Latin Barclay's fine old romance, entitled *Argenis*, published in 1772, under the title of *The Phœnix*. It was in 1777, five years afterwards, that she produced her first and most distinguished work. It was published by Mr. Dilly of the Poultry (who gave ten pounds for the copyright) under the title of *The Champion of Virtue, a Gothic Story*. The work came to a second edition in the succeeding year, and was then first called *The Old English Baron*. The cause of the change we do not pretend to guess; for if Fitzowen be considered as the Old English Baron, we do not see wherefore a character, passive in himself from beginning to end, and only acted upon

by others, should be selected to give a name to the story. We ought not to omit to mention that this work is inscribed to Mrs. Brigden, the daughter of Richardson, who is stated to have lent her assistance to the revisal and correction of the work.

The success of *The Old English Baron* encouraged Miss Reeve to devote more of her leisure hours to literary composition, and she published in succession the following works: *The Two Mentors, a Modern Story; the Progress of Romance, through Times, Countries, and Manners; The Exile, or Memoirs of the Count de Cronstadt*, the principal incidents of which are borrowed from a novel by M. D'Arnaud; *The School for Widows, a Novel; Plans of Education, with Remarks on the System of other Writers*, in a duodecimo volume; and *The Memoirs of Sir Roger de Clarendon, a natural Son of Edward the Black Prince, with Anecdotes of many other eminent Persons of the fourteenth Century.*

To these works we have to add another tale, of which the interest turned upon supernatural appearances. Miss Reeve informs the public, in a preface to a late edition of *The Old English Baron*, that, in compliance with the suggestion of a friend, she had composed *Castle Connor, an Irish Story*, in which apparitions were introduced. The manuscript, being intrusted to some careless or unfaithful person, fell aside, and was never recovered.

The various novels of Clara Reeve are all marked by excellent good sense, pure morality, and a competent command of those qualities which constitute a good romance. They were, generally speaking, favourably received at the time, but none of them took the same strong possession of the public mind as *The Old English Baron*, upon which the fame of the author may be considered as now exclusively rested.

Miss Reeve, respected and beloved, led a retired life, admitting no materials for biography, until 3rd December, 1803, when she died at Ipswich, her native city, at the advanced age of seventy-eight years. She was buried in the churchyard of St. Stephens, according to her particular direction, near to the grave of her friend, the Reverend Mr. Derby. Her brother, the Reverend Thomas Reeve, still lives, as also her sister, Mrs. Sarah Reeve, both advanced in life. Another brother, bred to the navy, attained the rank of vice-admiral in that service.

Such are the only particulars which we have been able to collect concerning this accomplished and estimable woman, and, in their simplicity, the reader may remark that of her life and of

her character. As critics, it is our duty to make some farther observations, which shall be entirely confined to her most celebrated work, upon which her fame arose, and on which, without meaning disparagement to her other compositions, we conceive it entitled to rest.

The authoress has herself informed us that *The Old English Baron* is the "literary offspring of *The Castle of Otranto;*" and she has obliged us by pointing out the different and more limited view which she had adopted of the supernatural machinery employed by Horace Walpole. She condemns the latter for the extravagance of several of his conceptions; for the gigantic size of his sword and helmet; and for the violent fictions of a walking picture, and a skeleton in a hermit's cowl. A ghost, she contends, to be admitted as an ingredient in romance, must behave himself like ghosts of sober demeanour, and subject himself to the common rules still preserved in grange and hall, as circumscribing beings of his description.

We must, however, notwithstanding her authority, enter our protest against fettering the realm of shadows by the opinions entertained of it in the world of realities. If we are to try ghosts by the ordinary rules of humanity, we bar them of their privileges entirely. For instance, why admit the existence of an aerial phantom, and deny it the terrible attribute of magnifying its stature? why admit an enchanted helmet, and not a gigantic one? why allow as an impressive incident the fall of a suit of armour, thrown down, we must suppose, by no mortal hand, and at the same time deny the same supernatural influence the power of producing the illusion (for it is only represented as such) upon Manfred, which gives seeming motion and life to the portrait of his ancestor? It may be said, and it seems to be Miss Reeve's argument, that there is a verge of probability, which even the most violent figment must not transgress; but we reply by the cross question, that if we are once to subject our preternatural agents to the limits of human reason, where are we to stop? We might, under such a rule, demand of ghosts an account of the very circuitous manner in which they are pleased to open their communications with the living world. We might, for example, move a *quo warranto* against the spectre of the murdered Lord Lovel, for lurking about the eastern apartment, when it might have been reasonably expected that, if he did not at once impeach his murderers to the next magistrate, he might at least have put Fitzowen into the secret, and thus obtained the succession of his son more easily than by the dubious and circuitous route of a

single combat. If there should be an appeal against this imputation, founded on the universal practice of ghosts, in such circumstances, who always act with singular obliquity in disclosing the guilt of which they complain, the matter becomes a question of precedent; in which view of the case, we may vindicate Horace Walpole for the gigantic exaggeration of his phantom, by the similar expansion of the terrific vision of Fadoun, in Blind Harry's *Life of Wallace;* and we could, were we so disposed, have paralleled his moving picture, by the example of one with which we ourselves had some acquaintance, which was said both to move and to utter groans, to the great alarm of a family of the highest respectability.

Where, then, may the reader ask, is the line to be drawn? or what are the limits to be placed to the reader's credulity, when those of common sense and ordinary nature are once exceeded? The question admits only one answer, namely, that the author himself, being in fact the magician, shall evoke no spirits whom he is not capable of endowing with manners and language corresponding to their supernatural character. Thus Shakspeare, drawing such characters as Caliban and Ariel, gave them reality, not by appealing to actual opinions, which his audience might entertain respecting the possibility or impossibility of their existence, but by investing them with such attributes as all readers and spectators recognised as those which must have corresponded to such extraordinary beings, had their existence been possible. If he had pleased to put into language the "squeaking and gibbering" of those disembodied phantoms which haunted the streets of Rome, no doubt his wonderful imagination could have filled up the sketch, which, marked by these two emphatic and singularly felicitous expressions, he has left as characteristic of the language of the dead.

In this point of view, our authoress has, with equal judgment and accuracy, confined her flight within those limits on which her pinions could support her; and though we are disposed to contest her general principle, we are willing to admit it as a wise and prudent one, so far as applied to regulate her own composition. In no part of *The Old English Baron,* or of any other of her works, does Miss Reeve show the possession of a rich or powerful imagination. Her dialogue is sensible, easy, and agreeable, but neither marked by high flights of fancy, nor strong bursts of passion. Her apparition is an ordinary fiction, of which popular superstition used to furnish a thousand instances, when nights were long, and a family, assembled round a Christmas log, had

little better to do than to listen to such tales. Miss Reeve has been very felicitously cautious in showing us no more of Lord Lovel's ghost than she needs must—he is a silent apparition, palpable to the sight only, and never brought forward into such broad daylight as might have dissolved our reverence. And so far, we repeat, the authoress has used her own power to the utmost advantage, and gained her point by not attempting a step beyond it. But we cannot allow that the rule which, in her own case, has been well and wisely adopted, ought to circumscribe a bolder and a more imaginative writer.

In what may be called the costume, or keeping, of the chivalrous period in which the scene of both is laid, the language and style of Horace Walpole, together with his intimate acquaintance with the manners of the middle ages, form an incalculable difference betwixt *The Castle of Otranto* and *The Old English Baron.* Clara Reeve, probably, was better acquainted with Plutarch and Rapin, than with Froissart or Olivier de la Marche. This is no imputation on the taste of that ingenious lady. In her days, Macbeth was performed in a general's full uniform, and Lord Hastings was dressed like a modern high chamberlain going to court. Or, if she looked to romances for her authority, those of the French school were found introducing, under the reign of Cyrus or of Faramond, or in the early republic at Rome, the sentiments and manners of the court of Louis XIV. In the present day, more attention to costume is demanded, and authors, as well as players, are obliged to make attempts, however fantastic or grotesque, to imitate the manners, on the one hand, and the dress on the other, of the times in which the scene is laid. Formerly, nothing of this kind was either required or expected; and it is not improbable that the manner in which Walpole circumscribes his dialogue (in most instances) within the stiff and stern precincts prescribed by a strict attention to the manners and language of the times, is the first instance of such restrictions. In *The Old English Baron,* on the contrary, all parties speak and act much in the fashion of the seventeenth century; employ the same phrases of courtesy; and adopt the same tone of conversation. Baron Fitzowen, and the principal characters, talk after the fashion of country squires of that period, and the lower personages like gaffers and gammers of the same era. And "were but the combat in lists left out," or converted into a modern duel, the whole train of incidents might, for any peculiarity to be traced in the dialect or narration, have taken place in the time of Charles II., or in either of the two succeeding

reigns. As it is, the story reads as if it had been transcribed into the language, and remodelled according to the ideas, of this latter period. Yet we are uncertain whether, upon the whole, this does not rather add to, than diminish the interest of the work; at least it gives an interest of a different kind, which, if it cannot compete with that which arises out of a highly exalted and poetical imagination, and a strict attention to the character and manners of the middle ages, has yet this advantage, that it reaches its point more surely than had a higher, more difficult, and more ambitious line of composition been attempted.

To explain our meaning:—He that would please the modern world, yet present the exact impression of a tale of the middle ages, will repeatedly find that he will be obliged, in despite of his utmost exertions, to sacrifice the last to the first object, and eternally expose himself to the just censure of the rigid antiquary, because he must, to interest the readers of the present time, invest his characters with language and sentiments unknown to the period assigned to his story; and thus his utmost efforts only attain a sort of composition between the true and the fictitious, just as the dress of Lear, as performed on the stage, is neither that of a modern sovereign, nor the cerulean painting and bear-hide with which the Britons, at the time when that monarch is supposed to have lived, tattooed their persons, and sheltered themselves from cold. All this inconsistency is avoided by adopting the style of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers, sufficiently antiquated to accord with the antiquated character of the narrative, yet copious enough to express all that is necessary to its interest, and to supply that deficiency of colouring which the more ancient times do not afford.

It is no doubt true that *The Old English Baron*, written in the latter and less ambitious taste, is sometimes tame and tedious, not to say mean and tiresome. The total absence of peculiar character (for every person introduced is rather described as one of a genus than as an original, discriminated, and individual person) may have its effect in producing the tædium which loads the story in some places. This is a general defect in the novels of the period, and it was scarce to be expected that the amiable and accomplished authoress, in her secluded situation, and with acquaintance of events and characters derived from books alone, should have rivalled those authors who gathered their knowledge of the human heart from having, like Fielding and Smollett, become acquainted, by sad experience, with each turn of "many-coloured life." Nor was it to be thought that she should have

emulated in this particular her prototype Walpole, who, as a statesman, a poet, and a man of the world, "who knew the world like a man," has given much individual character to his sketch of Manfred. What we here speak of is not the deficiency in the style and costume, but a certain creeping and low line of narrative and sentiment; which may be best illustrated by the grave and minute accounting into which Sir Philip Harclay and the Baron Fitzowen enter, after an event so unpleasant as the judgment of Heaven upon a murderer, brought about by a judicial combat, and that combat occasioned by the awful and supernatural occurrences in the eastern chamber, where we find the arrears of the estate gravely set off against the education of the heir, and his early maintenance in the Baron's family. Yet even these prolix, minute, and unnecessary details are precisely such as would occur in a similar story told by a grandsire or grandame to a circle assembled round a winter's fire; and while they take from the dignity of the composition, and would therefore have been rejected by a writer of more exalted imagination, do certainly add in some degree to its reality, and bear in that respect a resemblance to the art with which De Foe impresses on his readers the truth of his fictions, by the insertion of many minute, and immaterial, or unnatural circumstances, which we are led to suppose could only be recorded because they are true. Perhaps, to be circumstantial and abundant in minute detail, and in one word, though an unauthorised one, to be somewhat *prosy*, is a secret mode of securing a certain necessary degree of credulity from the hearers of a ghost-story. It gives a sort of quaint antiquity to the whole, as belonging to the times of "superstitious elde," and those whom we have observed to excel in oral narratives of such a nature, usually study to secure the attention of their audience by employing this art. At least, whether owing to this mode of telling her tale, or to the interest of the story itself, and its appeal to the secret reserve of superstitious feeling which maintains its influence in most bosoms, *The Old English Baron* has always produced as strong an effect as any story of the kind, although liable to the objections which we have freely stated, without meaning to impeach the talents of the amiable authoress.

Dismissing this interesting subject for the present, we trust we may find some future opportunity to offer a few more general remarks on the introduction of supernatural machinery into modern works of fiction.

MRS. ANN RADCLIFFE

THE life of Mrs. Ann Radcliffe, spent in the quiet shade of domestic privacy, and in the interchange of familiar affections and sympathies, appears to have been as retired and sequestered, as the fame of her writings was brilliant and universal. The most authentic account of her birth, family, and personal appearance, seems to be that contained in the following communication to a work of contemporary biography.[1]

"She was" (says this writer), "born in London, in the year 1764 [9th July]; the daughter of William and Ann Ward, who, though in trade, were nearly the only persons of their two families not living in handsome, or at least easy independence. Her paternal grandmother was a Cheselden, the sister of the celebrated surgeon, of whose kind regard her father had a grateful recollection, and some of whose presents, in books, I have seen. The late Lieutenant-Colonel Cheselden, of Somerby in Leicestershire, was, I think, another nephew of the surgeon. Her father's aunt, the late Mrs. Barwell, first of Leicester, and then of Duffield in Derbyshire, was one of the sponsors at her baptism. Her maternal grandmother was Anne Oates, the sister of Dr. Samuel Jebb, of Stratford, who was the father of Sir Richard: on that side she was also related to Dr. Halifax, Bishop of Gloucester, and to Dr. Halifax, Physician to the King. Perhaps it may gratify curiosity to state farther that she was descended from a near relative of the De Witts of Holland. In some family papers which I have seen, it is stated that a De Witt, of the family of John and Cornelius, came to England, under the patronage of government, upon some design of draining the fens in Lincolnshire, bringing with him a daughter, Amelia, then an infant. The prosecution of the plan is supposed to have been interrupted by the rebellion, in the time of Charles the First; but De Witt appears to have passed the remainder of his life in a mansion near Hull, and to have left many children, of whom Amelia was the mother of one of Mrs. Radcliffe's ancestors.

"This admirable writer, whom I remember from about the time of her twentieth year, was, in her youth, of a figure exquisitely proportioned; while she resembled her father, and his brother and sister, in being low of stature. Her complexion was

[1] [*Annual Biography and Obituary*, vol. viii., for 1824.]

beautiful, as was her whole countenance, especially her eyes, eyebrows, and mouth. Of the faculties of her mind, let her works speak. Her tastes were such as might be expected from those works. To contemplate the glories of creation, but more particularly the grander features of their display, was one of her chief delights: to listen to fine music was another. She had also a gratification in listening to any good verbal sounds; and would desire to hear passages repeated from the Latin and Greek classics; requiring, at intervals, the most literal translations that could be given, with all that was possible of their idiom, how much soever the version might be embarrassed by that aim at exactness. Though her fancy was prompt, and she was, as will readily be supposed, qualified in many respects for conversation, she had not the confidence and presence of mind without which, a person conscious of being observed, can scarcely be at ease, except in long-tried society. Yet she had not been without some good examples of what must have been ready conversation in more extensive circles. Besides that a great part of her youth had been passed in the residence of her superior relatives, she had the advantage of being much loved, when a child, by the late Mr. Bentley; to whom, on the establishment of the fabric known by the name of Wedgwood and Bentley's, was appropriated the superintendence of all that related to form and design. Mr. Wedgwood was the intelligent man of commerce, and the able chemist; Mr. Bentley the man of more general literature, and of taste in the arts. One of her mother's sisters was married to Mr. Bentley; and, during the life of her aunt, who was accomplished 'according to the moderation'—may I say, the *wise* moderation?—of that day, the little niece was a favourite guest at Chelsea, and afterwards at Turnham Green, where Mr. and Mrs. Bentley resided. At their house she saw several persons of distinction for literature; and others who, without having been so distinguished, were beneficial objects of attention for their minds and their manners. Of the former class the late Mrs. Montague, and once, I think, Mrs. Piozzi; of the latter, Mrs. Ord. The gentleman, called Athenian Stuart, was also a visitor there."

Thus respectably born and connected, Miss Ward, at the age of twenty-three, acquired the name which she has made so famous, by marrying William Radcliffe, Esq., graduated at Oxford, and a student of law. He renounced, however, the prosecution of his legal studies, and became afterwards proprietor and editor of the *English Chronicle*.

Thus connected in a manner which must have induced her to cherish her literary powers, Mrs. Radcliffe first came before the public as a novelist in 1789, only two years after her marriage, and when she was twenty-five years old. The romance, entitled *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, which she then produced, gave, however, but moderate intimation of the author's eminent powers. The scene is laid in Scotland, during the dark ages, but without any attempt to trace either the peculiar manners or scenery of the country; and although, in reading the work with that express purpose, we can now trace some germs of that taste and talent for the wild, romantic, and mysterious, which the authoress afterwards employed with such effect, we cannot consider it, on the whole, as by any means worthy of her pen. It is nevertheless curious to compare this sketch with Mrs. Radcliffe's more esteemed productions, since it is of consequence to the history of human genius to preserve its earlier efforts, that we may trace, if possible, how the oak at length germinates from the unmarked acorn.

Mrs. Radcliffe's genius was more advantageously displayed in the *Sicilian Romance*, which appeared in 1790, and which, as we ourselves (then novel-readers of no ordinary appetite) well recollect, attracted in a considerable degree the attention of the public. This work displays the exuberance and fertility of imagination, which was the author's principal characteristic. Adventures heaped on adventures, in quick and brilliant succession, with all the hair-breadth charms of escape or capture, hurry the reader along with them, and the imagery and scenery by which the action is relieved, are like those of a splendid Oriental tale. Still this work had marked traces of the defects natural to an unpractised author. The scenes were inartificially connected, and the characters hastily sketched, without any attempt at individual distinctions; being cast in the usual mould of ardent lovers, tyrannical parents, with domestic ruffians, guards, and others, who had wept or stormed through the chapters of romance, without much alteration in their family habits or features, for a quarter of a century before Mrs. Radcliffe's time. Nevertheless, the *Sicilian Romance* attracted much notice among the novel-readers of the day, as far excelling the ordinary meagreness of stale and uninteresting incident with which they were at that time regaled from the Leadenhall press. Indeed, the praise may be claimed for Mrs. Radcliffe, of having been the first to introduce into her prose fictions a beautiful and fanciful tone of natural description and impressive narrative,

which had hitherto been exclusively applied to poetry. Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, even Walpole, though writing upon an imaginative subject, are decidedly prose authors. Mrs. Radcliffe has a title to be considered as the first poetess of romantic fiction, that is, if actual rhythm shall not be deemed essential to poetry.

The Romance of the Forest, which appeared in 1791, placed the author at once in that rank and pre-eminence in her own particular style of composition, which her works have ever since maintained. Her fancy, in this new effort, was more regulated, and subjected to the fetters of a regular story. The persons, too, although perhaps there is nothing very original in the conception, were depicted with skill far superior to that which the author had hitherto displayed, and the work attracted the public attention in proportion. That of La Motte, indeed, is sketched with particular talent, and most part of the interest of the piece depends upon the vacillations of a character, who, though upon the whole we may rather term him weak and vicious, than villanous, is, nevertheless, at every moment on the point of becoming an agent in atrocities which his heart disapproves of. He is the exact picture "of the needy man who has known better days;" one who, spited at the world, from which he has been expelled with contempt, and condemned by circumstances to seek an asylum in a desolate mansion full of mysteries and horrors, avenges himself, by playing the gloomy despot within his own family, and tyrannising over those who were subjected to him only by their strong sense of duty. A more powerful agent appears on the scene—obtains the mastery over this dark but irresolute spirit, and, by alternate exertion of seduction and terror, compels him to be his agent in schemes against the virtue, and even the life of an orphan whom he was bound in gratitude, as well as in honour and hospitality, to cherish and protect.

The heroine, too, wearing the usual costume of innocence, purity, and simplicity, as proper to heroines as white gowns are to the sex in general, has some pleasant touches of originality. Her grateful affection for the La Motte family—her reliance on their truth and honour, when the wife had become unkind, and the father treacherous towards her, is an interesting and individual trait in her character.

But although undoubtedly the talents of Mrs. Radcliffe, in the important point of drawing and finishing the characters of her narrative, were greatly improved since her earlier attempts, and manifested sufficient power to raise her far above the

common crowd of novelists, this was not the department of art on which her popularity rested. The public were chiefly aroused, or rather fascinated, by the wonderful conduct of a story, in which the author so successfully called out the feelings of mystery and of awe, while chapter after chapter, and incident after incident, maintained the thrilling attraction of awakened curiosity and suspended interest. Of these, every reader felt the force, from the sage in his study, to the family group in middle life, which assembles round the evening taper, to seek a solace from the toils of ordinary existence by an excursion into the regions of imagination. The tale was the more striking, because varied and relieved by descriptions of the ruined mansion, and the forest with which it is surrounded, under so many different points of view, now pleasing and serene, now gloomy, now terrible—scenes which could only have been drawn by one to whom nature had given the eye of a painter, with the spirit of a poet.

In 1793, Mrs. Radcliffe had the advantage of visiting the scenery of the Rhine, and, although we are not positive of the fact, we are strongly inclined to suppose that *The Mysteries of Udolpho* were written, or at least corrected, after the date of this journey; for the mouldering castles of the robber-chivalry of Germany, situated on the wild and romantic banks of that celebrated stream, seem to have given a bolder flight to her imagination, and a more glowing character to her colouring, than are exhibited in *The Romance of the Forest.* The scenery on the Lakes of Westmoreland, which Mrs. Radcliffe visited about the same time, was also highly calculated to awaken her fancy, as nature has in these wild but beautiful regions realised the descriptions in which this authoress loved to indulge. Her remarks upon these countries were given to the public in 1794, in a very well-written work, entitled, *A Journey through Holland, etc.*

Much was of course expected from Mrs. Radcliffe's next effort, and the booksellers felt themselves authorised in offering what was then considered as an unprecedented sum, £500, for *The Mysteries of Udolpho.* It often happens that a writer's previous reputation proves the greatest enemy which, in a second attempt upon public favour, he has to encounter. Exaggerated expectations are excited and circulated, and criticism, which had been seduced into former approbation by the pleasure of surprise, now stands awakened and alert to pounce upon every failing. Mrs. Radcliffe's popularity, how-

ever, stood the test, and was heightened rather than diminished by *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. The very name was fascinating; and the public, who rushed upon it with all the eagerness of curiosity, rose from it with unsated appetite. When a family was numerous, the volumes always flew, and were sometimes torn, from hand to hand; and the complaints of those whose studies were thus interrupted were a general tribute to the genius of the author. Another might be found of a different and higher description, in the dwelling of the lonely invalid, or unregarded votary of celibacy, who was bewitched away from a sense of solitude, of indisposition, of the neglect of the world, or of secret sorrow, by the potent charm of this mighty enchantress. Perhaps the perusal of such works may, without injustice, be compared with the use of opiates, baneful when habitually and constantly resorted to, but of most blessed power in those moments of pain and of languor, when the whole head is sore, and the whole heart sick. If those who rail indiscriminately at this species of composition were to consider the quantity of actual pleasure which it produces, and the much greater proportion of real sorrow and distress which it alleviates, their philanthropy ought to moderate their critical pride, or religious intolerance.

To return to *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. The author, pursuing her own favourite bent of composition, and again waving her wand over the world of wonder and imagination, had judiciously used a spell of broader and more potent command. The situation and distresses of the heroines have here, and in *The Romance of the Forest*, a general aspect of similarity. Both are divided from the object of their attachment by the gloomy influence of unfaithful and oppressive guardians, and both become inhabitants of time-stricken towers, and witnesses of scenes now bordering on the supernatural, and now upon the horrible. But this general resemblance is only such as we love to recognise in pictures which have been painted by the same hand, and as companions for each other. Everything in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is on a larger and more sublime scale than in *The Romance of the Forest;* the interest is of a more agitating and tremendous nature; the scenery of a wilder and more terrific description; the characters distinguished by fiercer and more gigantic features. Montoni, a lofty-souled desperado, and Captain of Condottieri, stands beside La Motte and his Marquis, like one of Milton's fiends beside a witch's familiar. Adeline is confined within a ruined manor-house, but

her sister heroine, Emily, is imprisoned in a huge castle, like those of feudal times; the one is attacked and defended by bands of armed banditti, the other only threatened by a visit from constables and thief-takers. The scale of the landscape is equally different; the quiet and limited woodland scenery of the one work forming a contrast with the splendid and high-wrought descriptions of Italian mountain grandeur which occur in the other.

In general, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* was, at its first appearance, considered as a step beyond Mrs. Radcliffe's former work, high as that had justly advanced her. We entertain the same opinion in again reading them both, even after some years' interval. Yet there were persons of no mean judgment, to whom the simplicity of *The Romance of the Forest* seemed preferable to the more highly coloured and broader style of *The Mysteries of Udolpho;* and it must remain matter of opinion, whether their preference be better founded than in the partialities of a first love, which in literature, as in life, are often unduly predominant. With the majority of readers, the superior magnificence of landscape, and dignity of conception of character, secured the palm for the more recent work.

The fifth production by which Mrs. Radcliffe arrested the attention of the public was fated to be her last. *The Italian,* which appeared in 1797, was purchased by the booksellers for £800, and obtained a share of public favour equal to any of its predecessors. Here, too, the author had, with much judgment, taken such a point of distance and distinction that, while employing her own peculiar talent, and painting in the style of which she may be considered the inventor, she cannot be charged with repeating or copying herself. She selected the new and powerful machinery afforded her by the Popish religion, when established in its paramount superiority, and thereby had at her disposal, monks, spies, dungeons, the mute obedience of the bigot, the dark and dominating spirit of the crafty priest —all the thunders of the Vatican, and all the terrors of the Inquisition. This fortunate adoption placed in the hands of the authoress a powerful set of agents, who were at once supplied with means and motives for bringing forward scenes of horror; and thus a tinge of probability was thrown over even those parts of the story which are most inconsistent with the ordinary train of human events.

Most writers of romance have been desirous to introduce their narrative to the reader in some manner which might at

once excite interest, and prepare his mind for the species of excitation which it was the author's object to produce. In *The Italian*, this has been achieved by Mrs. Radcliffe with an uncommon degree of felicity; nor is there any part of the romance itself which is more striking than its impressive commencement.

A party of English travellers visit a Neapolitan church:—

"Within the shade of the portico, a person with folded arms, and eyes directed towards the ground, was pacing behind the pillars the whole extent of the pavement, and was apparently so engaged by his own thoughts, as not to observe that strangers were approaching. He turned, however, suddenly, as if startled by the sound of steps, and then, without farther pausing, glided to a door that opened into the church, and disappeared.

"There was something too extraordinary in the figure of this man, and too singular in his conduct, to pass unnoticed by the visitors. He was of a tall thin figure, bending forward from the shoulders; of a sallow complexion, and harsh features, and had an eye which, as it looked up from the cloak that muffled the lower part of his countenance, was expressive of uncommon ferocity.

"The travellers, on entering the church, looked round for the stranger, who had passed thither before them, but he was nowhere to be seen; and, through all the shade of the long aisles, only one other person appeared. This was a friar of the adjoining convent, who sometimes pointed out to strangers the objects in the church which were most worthy of attention, and who now, with this design, approached the party that had just entered.

"When the party had viewed the different shrines and whatever had been judged worthy of observation, and were returning through an obscure aisle towards the portico, they perceived the person who had appeared upon the steps, passing towards a confessional on the left, and, as he entered it, one of the party pointed him out to the friar, and enquired who he was; the friar turning to look after him, did not immediately reply, but, on the question being repeated, he inclined his head, as in a kind of obeisance, and calmly replied, 'He is an assassin.'

"'An assassin!' exclaimed one of the Englishmen; 'an assassin, and at liberty!'

"An Italian gentleman, who was of the party, smiled at the astonishment of his friend.

"'He has sought sanctuary here,' replied the friar; 'within these walls he may not be hurt.'

"'Do your altars, then, protect a murderer!' said the Englishman.

"'He could find shelter nowhere else,' answered the friar, meekly.

. . . . . .

"'But observe yonder confessional,' added the Italian, 'that beyond the pillars on the left of the aisle, below a painted window. Have you discovered it? The colours of the glass throw, instead of a light, a shade over that part of the church, which, perhaps, prevents your distinguishing what I mean.'

"The Englishman looked whither his friend pointed, and observed a confessional of oak, or some very dark wood, adjoining the wall, and remarked also, that it was the same which the assassin had just entered. It consisted of three compartments, covered with a black canopy. In the central division was the chair of the confessor, elevated by several steps above the pavement of the church; and on either hand was a small closet, or box, with steps leading up to a grated partition, at which the penitent might kneel, and, concealed from observation, pour into the ear of the confessor, the consciousness of crimes that lay heavy at his heart.

"'You observe it?' said the Italian.

"'I do,' replied the Englishman: 'it is the same which the assassin had passed into; and I think it one of the most gloomy spots I ever beheld; the view of it is enough to strike a criminal with despair!'

"'We, in Italy, are not so apt to despair,' replied the Italian, smilingly.

"'Well, but what of this confessional?' enquired the Englishman. 'The assassin entered it.'

"'He has no relation with what I am about to mention,' said the Italian; 'but I wish you to mark the place, because some very extraordinary circumstances belong to it.'

"'What are they?' said the Englishman.

"'It is now several years since the confession, which is connected with them, was made at that very confessional,' added the Italian; 'the view of it, and the sight of the assassin, with your surprise at the liberty which is allowed him, led me to a recollection of the story. When you return to the hotel, I will communicate it to you, if you have no pleasanter mode of engaging your time.'

"'After I have taken another view of this solemn edifice,' replied the Englishman, 'and particularly of the confessional you have pointed to my notice.'

"While the Englishman glanced his eye over the high roofs, and along the solemn perspectives of the Santa del Pianto, he perceived the figure of the assassin stealing from the confessional across the choir, and, shocked on again beholding him, he turned his eyes, and hastily quitted the church.

"The friends then separated, and the Englishman, soon after returning to his hotel, received the volume. He read as follows."

This introductory passage, which, for the references which it bears to the story, and the anxious curiosity it excites in the reader's mind, may be compared to the dark and vaulted gateway of an ancient castle, is followed by a tale of corresponding mystery and terror; in detailing which, the art of Mrs. Radcliffe, who was so great a mistress of throwing her narrative into mystery, affording half intimations of veiled and secret horrors, is used perhaps to the very uttermost. And yet, though our reason ultimately presents us with this criticism, we believe she generally suspends her remonstrance till the

perusal is ended; and it is not until the last page is read, and the last volume closed, that we feel ourselves disposed to censure that which has so keenly interested us. We become then at length aware that there is no uncommon merit in the general contrivance of the story; that many of the incidents are improbable, and some of the mysteries left unexplained; yet the impression of general delight which we have received from the perusal remains unabated, for it is founded on recollection of the powerful emotions of wonder, curiosity, even fear, to which we have been subjected during the currency of the narrative.

A youth of high birth and noble estates becomes enamoured of a damsel of low fortunes, unknown race, and all that portion of beauty and talents which belongs to a heroine of romance. Their union is opposed by his family, and chiefly by the pride of his mother, who calls to her aid the real hero of the tale, her confessor, Father Schedoni, a strongly drawn character as ever stalked through the regions of romance, equally detestable for the crimes he has formerly perpetrated, and those which he is willing to commit; formidable from his talents and energy; at once a hypocrite and a profligate, unfeeling, unrelenting, and implacable. With the aid of this agent, Vivaldi, the lover, is thrown into the dungeons of the Inquisition, while Ellena, his bride, is carried by the pitiless monk to an obscure den, where, finding the services of an associate likely to foil his expectation, he resolves to murder her with his own hand. Hitherto the story, or, at least, the situation, is not altogether dissimilar from the *Mysteries of Udolpho:* but the fine scene, where the monk, in the act of raising his arm to murder his sleeping victim, discovers her to be his own child, is of a new, grand, and powerful character; and the horrors of the wretch, who, on the brink of murder, has but just escaped from committing a crime of yet more exaggerated horror, constitute the strongest painting which has been produced by Mrs. Radcliffe's pencil, and form a crisis well fitted to be actually embodied on canvas by some great master. In the prisons of the Inquisition, the terrific Schedoni is met, counterplotted, and at length convicted, by the agency of a being as wicked as himself, who had once enjoyed his confidence. Several pauses of breathless suspense are thrown in, during the detail of these intrigues, by which Mrs. Radcliffe knew so well how to give interest to the work.

On reconsidering the narrative, we indeed discover that many of the incidents are imperfectly explained, and that we can distinguish points upon which the authoress had doubtless

intended to lay the foundation of something which she afterwards forgot or omitted. Of the first class, is the astonishment testified by the Grand Inquisitor with such striking effect, when a strange voice was heard, even in the awful presence of that stern tribunal, to assume the task of interrogation proper to its judges. The incident in itself is most impressive. As Vivaldi is blindfolded, and bound upon the rack, the voice of a mysterious agent, who had repeatedly crossed his path, and always eluded his search, is heard to mingle in his examination, and strikes the whole assembly with consternation.

"'Who is come amongst us?' he [the Grand Inquisitor] repeated, in a louder tone. Still no answer was returned; but again a confused murmur sounded from the tribunal, and a general consternation seemed to prevail. No person spoke with sufficient pre-eminence to be understood by Vivaldi; something extraordinary appeared to be passing, and he awaited the issue with all the patience he could command. Soon after he heard the doors opened, and the noise of persons quitting the chamber. A deep silence followed; but he was certain that the familiars were still beside him, waiting to begin their work of torture."

This is all unquestionably very impressive; but no other explanation of the intruder's character is given than that he is an officer of the Inquisition; a circumstance which may explain his being present at Vivaldi's examination, but by no means his interference with it, against the pleasure of the Grand Inquisitor. The latter certainly would neither have been surprised at the presence of one of his own officials, nor overawed by his deportment; since the one was a point of ordinary duty, and the other must have been accounted as an impertinence. It may be added also, that there is no full or satisfactory reason assigned for the fell and unpitying hostility of Zampari to Schedoni, and that the reasons which can be gathered are inadequate and trivial.

We may notice an instance of even greater negligence, in the passages respecting the ruined palace of the Baron di Cambrusca, where the imperfect tale of horror hinted at by a peasant, the guide of Schedoni, appears to jar upon the galled conscience of the monk, and induces the reader to expect a train of important consequences. Unquestionably, the ingenious authoress had meant this half-told tale to correspond with some particulars in the proposed development of the story, which having been finished more hastily, or in a different manner from what she intended, she had, like a careless knitter, neglected to take up

her "loose stitches." It is, however, a baulking of the reader's imagination, which authors in this department would do well to guard against. At the same time, critics are bound in mercy to remember, how much more easy it is to devise a complicated chain of interest, than to disentangle it with perfect felicity. Dryden, it is said, used to curse the inventors of fifth acts in the drama, and romance-writers owe no blessings to the memory of him who devised explanatory chapters.

We have been told that, in this beautiful romance, the customs and rules of the Inquisition have been violated; a charge more easily made than proved, and which, if true, is of minor importance, because its code is happily but little known to us. It is matter of more obvious criticism, and therefore a greater error, that the scraps of Italian language introduced to give locality to the scene, are not happily chosen, and savour of affectation. But if Mrs. Radcliffe did not intimately understand the language and manners of Italy, the following extract may prove how well she knew how to paint Italian scenery, which she could only have seen in the pictures of Claude or Poussin.

"These excursions sometimes led to Puzzuoli, Baia, or the woody cliffs of Pausilippo; and as, on their return, they glided along the moonlight bay, the melodies of Italian strains seemed to give enchantment to the scenery of its shore. At this cool hour the voices of the vine-dressers were frequently heard in trio, as they reposed, after the labour of the day, on some pleasant promontory, under the shade of poplars; or the brisk music of the dance from fishermen, on the margin of the waves below. The boatmen rested on their oars, while their company listened to voices modulated by sensibility to finer eloquence, than it is in the power of art alone to display; and at others, while they observed the airy natural grace, which distinguishes the dance of the fishermen and peasant girls of Naples. Frequently, as they glided round a promontory, whose shaggy masses impended far over the sea, such magic scenes of beauty unfolded, adorned by these dancing groups on the bay beyond, as no pencil could do justice to. The deep clear waters reflected every image of the landscape; the cliffs, branching into wild forms, crowned with groves, whose rough foliage often spread down their steeps in picturesque luxuriance; the ruined villa, on some bold point, peeping through the trees; peasants' cabins hanging on the precipices, and the dancing figures on the strand—all touched with the silvery tint and soft shadows of moonlight. On the other hand, the sea, trembling with a long line of radiance, and showing in the clear distance the sails of vessels stealing in every direction along its surface, presented a prospect as grand as the landscape was beautiful."

There are other descriptive passages, which, like those in *The*

Mysteries of Udolpho, approach more nearly to the style of Salvator Rosa.

The Italian was received with as much ardour as Mrs. Radcliffe's two previous novels, and it was from no coldness on the part of the public that, like an actress in full possession of applauded powers, she chose to retreat from the stage in the blaze of her fame. After publication of *The Italian*, in 1797, the public were not favoured with any more of Mrs. Radcliffe's works.

We are left in vain to conjecture the reasons which, for more than twenty years, condemned an imagination so fertile, so far as the public were concerned, to sterility. The voice of unfriendly criticism, always as sure an attendant upon merit as envy herself, may perhaps have intimidated the gentleness of her character; or Mrs. Radcliffe, as frequently happens, may have been disgusted at seeing the mode of composition, which she had brought into fashion, profaned by the host of servile imitators, who could only copy and render more prominent her defects, without aspiring to her merits. But so steadily did she keep her resolution, that for more than twenty years the name of Mrs. Radcliffe was never mentioned, unless with reference to her former productions, and in general (so retired was the current of her life) there was a belief that Fate had removed her from the scene.

Notwithstanding her refraining from publication, it is impossible to believe that an imagination so strong, supported by such ready powers of expression, should have remained inactive during so long a period; but the manuscripts on which she was occasionally employed have as yet been withheld from the public. We have reason to believe that arrangements were at one time almost concluded between Mrs. Radcliffe and a highly respectable publishing-house, respecting a poetical romance, but were broken off in consequence of the author changing or delaying her intention of publication. It is to be hoped that the world will not be ultimately deprived of what undoubtedly must be the source of much pleasure whenever it shall see the light.

The tenor of Mrs. Radcliffe's private life seems to have been peculiarly calm and sequestered. She probably declined the sort of personal notoriety which, in London society, usually attaches to persons of literary merit; and, perhaps, no author whose works were so universally read and admired was so little personally known even to the most active of that class of people of distinction, who rest their peculiar pretensions to fashion upon the selection of literary society. Her estate was certainly not

the less gracious; and it did not disturb Mrs. Radcliffe's domestic comforts, although many of her admirers believed, and some are not yet undeceived, that, in consequence of brooding over the terrors which she depicted, her reason had at length been overturned, and that the author of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* only existed as the melancholy inmate of a private mad-house. This report was so generally spread, and so confidently repeated in print, as well as in conversation, that the editor believed it for several years, until, greatly to his satisfaction, he learned, from good authority, that there neither was, nor ever had been, the most distant foundation for this unpleasing rumour.

A false report of another kind gave Mrs. Radcliffe much concern. In Miss Seward's *Correspondence*, among the literary gossip of the day, it is roundly stated, that the *Plays upon the Passions* were Mrs. Radcliffe's, and that she owned them.[1] Mrs. Radcliffe was much hurt at being reported capable of borrowing from the fame of a gifted sister; and the late Miss Seward would, no doubt, have suffered equally, had she been aware of the pain she inflicted by giving currency to a rumour so totally unfounded. The truth is, that, residing at a distance from the metropolis, and living upon literary intelligence as her daily food, Miss Seward was sometimes imposed upon by those friendly caterers who were more anxious to supply her with the newest intelligence than solicitous about its accuracy.

During the last twelve years of her life, Mrs. Radcliffe suffered from a spasmodic asthma, which considerably affected her general health and spirits. This chronic disorder took a more fatal turn upon the 9th of January, 1823; and upon the 7th of February following, terminated the life of this ingenious and amiable lady, at her own house in London.

Mrs. Radcliffe, as an author, has the most decided claim to take her place among the favoured few, who have been distinguished as the founders of a class, or school. She led the way in a peculiar style of composition, affecting powerfully the mind of the reader, which has since been attempted by many, but in which no one has attained or approached the excellences of the original inventor, unless perhaps the author of *The Family of Montorio*.[2]

[1] [See a Letter, dated May, 1799, in Miss Seward's *Correspondence*, edited by Sir W. Scott.]

[2] [The Rev. Charles Maturin of Dublin, who died in October 1824; and whose talents were first brought into notice by Sir W. Scott's article on Montorio, in the *Quarterly Review* for May, 1810.]

The species of romance which Mrs. Radcliffe introduced, bears nearly the same relation to the novel that the modern anomaly entitled a melodrame does to the proper drama. It does not appeal to the judgment by deep delineations of human feeling, or stir the passions by scenes of deep pathos, or awaken the fancy by tracing out, with spirit and vivacity, the lighter marks of life and manners, or excite mirth by strong representations of the ludicrous or humorous. In other words, it attains its interest neither by the path of comedy nor of tragedy; and yet it has, notwithstanding, a deep, decided, and powerful effect, gained by means independent of both—by an appeal, in one word, to the passion of fear, whether excited by natural dangers, or by the suggestions of superstition. The force, therefore, of the production, lies in the delineation of external incident, while the characters of the agents, like the figures in many landscapes, are entirely subordinate to the scenes in which they are placed; and are only distinguished by such outlines as make them seem appropriate to the rocks and trees, which have been the artist's principal objects. The persons introduced—and here also the correspondence holds betwixt the melo-drame and the romantic novel—bear the features, not of individuals, but of the class to which they belong. A dark and tyrannical count; an aged crone of a housekeeper, the depositary of many a family legend; a garrulous waiting-maid; a gay and light-hearted valet; a villain or two of all work; and a heroine, fulfilled with all perfections, and subjected to all manner of hazards, form the stock-in-trade of a romancer or a melodramatist; and if these personages be dressed in the proper costume, and converse in language sufficiently appropriate to their stations and qualities, it is not expected that the audience shall shake their sides at the humour of the dialogue, or weep over its pathos.

On the other hand, it is necessary that these characters, though not delineated with individual features, should be truly and forcibly sketched in the outline; that their dress and general appearance should correspond with and support the trick of the scene; and that their language and demeanour should either enhance the terrors amongst which they move, or form, as the action may demand, a strong and vivid contrast to them. Mrs. Radcliffe's powers of fancy were particularly happy in depicting such personages, in throwing upon them and their actions just enough of that dubious light which mystery requires, and in supplying them with language and manners which correspond

with their situation and business upon the scene.[1] We may take, as an example, the admirable description of the monk Schedoni:

"His figure was striking, but not so from grace; it was tall, and though extremely thin, his limbs were large and uncouth, and as he stalked along, wrapt in the black garments of his order, there was something terrible in his air; something almost superhuman. His cowl, too, as it threw a shade over the livid paleness of his face increased its severe character, and gave an effect to his large melancholy eye, which approached to horror. His was not the melancholy of a sensible and wounded heart, but apparently that of a gloomy and ferocious disposition. There was something in his physiognomy extremely singular, and that cannot easily be defined. It bore the traces of many passions, which seemed to have fixed the features they no longer animated. An habitual gloom and severity prevailed over the deep lines of his countenance;[2] and his eyes were so piercing, that they seemed to penetrate, at a single glance, into the hearts of men, and to read their most secret thoughts; few persons could support their scrutiny, or even endure to meet them twice."[3]

[1] ["This prelude, like the tuning of an instrument by a skilful hand, has the effect of producing at once in the mind a tone of feeling corresponding to the future story. In this, as in the former productions, the curiosity of the reader is kept upon the stretch by mystery and wonder. The author seems perfectly to understand that obscurity, as Burke has asserted, is a strong ingredient in the sublime; a face shrouded in a cowl; a narrative suddenly suspended; deep guilt half revealed; the untold secrets of a prison house; the terrific shape, 'if shape it might be called that shape had none distinguishable;'—all these affect the mind more powerfully than any regular or distinct images of danger or of woe."—Mrs. Barbauld.]

[2] ["The flash of that dilating eye
Reveals too much of times gone by;
Though varying, indistinct its hue,
Oft will his glance the gazer rue,
For in it lurks that nameless spell,
Which speaks, itself unspeakable.
. . . . . .
. . . Such ghastly mirth
From joyaunce ne'er derived its birth.
But sadder still it were to trace
What once were feelings in that face."
The Giaour.]

[3] ["His features' deepening lines and varying hue
At times attracted, yet perplex'd the view,
As if within that murkiness of mind
Work'd feelings fearful, and yet undefined;
Such might it be—that none can truly tell—
Too close enquiry his stern glance would quell.
There breathe but few whose aspect might defy
The full encounter of his searching eye:
He had the skill, when Cunning's gaze would seek
To probe his heart and watch his changing cheek,
At once the observer's purpose to espy,
And on himself roll back his scrutiny."
The Corsair.]

Yet, notwithstanding all this gloom and austerity, some rare occasions of interest had called forth a character upon his countenance entirely different; and he could adapt himself to the tempers and passions of persons whom he wished to conciliate with astonishing facility, and generally with complete triumph.[1] This monk, this Schedoni, was the confessor and secret adviser of the Marchesa di Vivaldi."

To draw such portraits as Schedoni's, and others which occur in Mrs. Radcliffe's novels, requires no mean powers; and although they belong rather to romance than to real life, the impression which they make upon the imagination is scarce lessened by the sense, that they are in some sort as fabulous as fairies or ogres. But when the public have been surprised into a universal burst of applause, it is their custom to indemnify themselves by a corresponding degree of censure; just as children, when tired of admiring a new plaything, find a fresh and distinct pleasure in breaking it to pieces. Mrs. Radcliffe, who had afforded such general delight to the public, was not doomed to escape the common fate; and the criticism with which she was assailed, was the more invidious, that it was inflicted, in more than one case, by persons of genius, who followed the same pursuit with herself. It was the cry at the period, and has sometimes been repeated since, that the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe, and the applause with which they were received, were evil signs of the times, and argued a great and increasing degradation of the public taste, which, instead of banqueting as heretofore upon scenes of passion, like those of Richardson, or of life and manners, as in the pages of Smollett and Fielding, was now coming back to the fare of the nursery, and gorged upon the wild and improbable fictions of an overheated imagination. There might be some truth in this, if it were only applied to the crowd of copyists who came forward in imitation of Mrs. Radcliffe, and assumed her magic wand, without having the power of wielding it with effect. No author can be arraigned

[1] ["Time hath not yet the features fix'd,
But brighter traits with evil mix'd;
And there are hues not always faded,
Which speak a mind not all degraded
Even by the crimes through which it waded:
The common crowd but see the gloom
Of wayward deeds, and fitting doom;
The close observer can espy
A noble soul and lineage high:
Alas! though both bestow'd in vain,
Which Grief could change, and Guilt could stain,
It was no vulgar tenement," etc.
The Giaour.]

for the deficiencies of those who servilely copy his style, and, following their original as the shadow follows the substance, present an obscure, distorted, and indistinct outline of what is in itself clear, precise, and distinct. But the inferiority of this servile race is much more like to put the particular style they imitate out of fashion, than to engraft its peculiarities upon the public taste.

When applied to Mrs. Radcliffe herself, the tone of criticism which we allude to will, when justly examined, be found to rest chiefly on that depreciating spirit, which would undermine the fair fame of an accomplished writer, by showing that she does not possess the excellences proper to a style of composition totally different from that which she has attempted. The question is neither, whether the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe possess merits which her plan did not require, nay, almost excluded; nor whether hers is to be considered as a department of fictitious composition, equal in dignity and importance to those where the great ancient masters have long pre-occupied the ground. The real and only point is, whether, considered as a separate and distinct species of writing, that introduced by Mrs. Radcliffe possesses merit, and affords pleasure; for, these premises being admitted, it is as unreasonable to complain of the absence of advantages foreign to her style and plan, and proper to those of another mode of composition, as to regret that the peach-tree does not produce grapes, or the vine peaches. A glance upon the face of nature is, perhaps, the best cure for this unjust and unworthy system of criticism. We there behold, that not only each star differs from another in glory, but that there is spread over the face of Nature a boundless variety; and that as a thousand different kinds of shrubs and flowers, not only have beauties independent of each other, but are more delightful from that very circumstance than if they were uniform, so the fields of literature admit the same variety; and it may be said of the Muse of Fiction, as well as of her sisters,

"Mille habet ornatus, mille decenter habet."

It may be stated, to the additional confusion of such hyper-critics as we allude to, that not only does the infinite variety of human tastes require different styles of composition for their gratification; but if there were to be selected one particular structure of fiction, which possesses charms for the learned and unlearned, the grave and gay, the gentleman and the clown, it would be perhaps that of those very romances which the severity

of their criticism seeks to depreciate. There are many men too mercurial to be delighted by Richardson's beautiful, but protracted display of the passions; and there are some too dull to comprehend the wit of Le Sage, or too saturnine to relish the nature and spirit of Fielding: And yet these very individuals will with difficulty be divorced from *The Romance of the Forest*, or *The Mysteries of Udolpho;* for curiosity and a lurking love of mystery, together with a germ of superstition, are more general ingredients in the human mind, and more widely diffused through the mass of humanity, than either genuine taste for the comic, or true feeling of the pathetic. The unknown author of *The Pursuits of Literature*, who, in respect to common tales of terror,

> " boasts an English heart,
> Unused at ghosts or rattling bones to start,"

acknowledges, nevertheless, the legitimate character of Mrs. Radcliffe's art, and pays no mean tribute to her skill. Of some sister novelists he talks with slight regard.

> " Though all of them are ingenious ladies, yet they are too frequently whining and frisking in novels, till our girls' heads turn wild with impossible adventures; and now and then are tainted with democracy. Not so the mighty magician of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, bred and nourished by the Florentine muses in their secret solitary caverns, amid the paler shrines of Gothic superstition, and in all the dreariness of enchantment; a poetess whom Ariosto would with rapture have acknowledged as,
>
> ——— 'La nudrita
> Damigella Trivulzia AL SACRO SPECO.'—O. F. c. xlvi."

Mrs. Radcliffe was not made acquainted with this high compliment till long after the satire was published; and its value was enhanced by the author's general severity of judgment, and by his perfect acquaintance with the manners and language of Italy, in which she had laid her scene.[1]

[1] [" Many other individuals of eminence in taste and literature might be adverted to, as having also expressed themselves in strong terms of Mrs. Radcliffe's genius. Dr. Joseph Warton, the Head Master of Winchester School, who was then at a very advanced period of life, told Mr. George Robinson, Mrs. Radcliffe's publisher, that happening to take up *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, he was so fascinated, that he could not go to bed until he had finished it, and that he actually sat up a great part of the night for that purpose. Mr. Sheridan spoke of the same production with great praise; and Mr. Fox, in a letter which he wrote to an intimate friend at the time when Mrs. Radcliffe's works were the subject of general conversation and remark, mentioned them all in terms of high commendation, and entered into a particular examination and comparison of their respective merits."—Mrs. Barbauld.]

It is farther to be observed, that the same class of critics who ridiculed these romances as unnatural and improbable, were disposed to detract from the genius of the author, on account of the supposed facility of her task. Art or talent, they said, was not required to produce that sort of interest and emotion, which is perhaps, after all, more strongly excited by a vulgar legend of a village ghost, than by the high painting and laboured descriptions of Mrs. Radcliffe. But this criticism is not much better founded than the former. The feelings of suspense and awful attention which she excites, are awakened by means of springs which lie open indeed to the first touch, but which are peculiarly liable to be worn out by repeated pressure. The public soon, like Macbeth, become satiated with horrors, and indifferent to the strongest *stimuli* of that kind. It shows, therefore, the excellence and power of Mrs. Radcliffe's genius, that she was able three times to bring back her readers with fresh appetite to a banquet of the same description; while of her numerous imitators, who rang the changes upon old castles and forests, and "antres dire," scarcely one attracted attention, until Mr. Lewis published his *Monk*, several years after she had resigned her pen.

The materials of these celebrated romances, and the means employed in conducting the narrative, are all selected with a view to the author's primary object, of moving the reader by ideas of impending danger, hidden guilt, supernatural visitings, by all that is terrible, in short, combined with much that is wonderful. For this purpose, her scenery is generally as gloomy as her tale, and her personages are those at whose frown that groom grows darker. She has uniformly (except in her first effort) selected for her place of action the south of Europe, where the human passions, like the weeds of the climate, are supposed to attain portentous growth under the fostering sun; which abounds with ruined monuments of antiquity, as well as the more massive remnants of the middle ages; and where feudal tyranny and Catholic superstition still continue to exercise their sway over the slave and bigot, and to indulge to the haughty lord, or more haughty priest, that sort of despotic power, the exercise of which seldom fails to deprave the heart, and disorder the judgment. These circumstances are skilfully selected, to give probability to events which could not, without great violation of truth, be represented as having taken place in England. Yet, even with the allowances which we make for foreign minds and manners, the unterminating succession of misfortunes which press upon

the heroine, strikes us as unnatural. She is continually struggling with the tide of adversity, and hurried downwards by its torrent; and if any more gay description is occasionally introduced, it is only as a contrast, and not a relief, to the melancholy and gloomy tenor of the narrative.

In working upon the sensations of natural and superstitious fear, Mrs. Radcliffe has made much use of obscurity and suspense, the most fertile source, perhaps, of sublime emotion; for there are few dangers that do not become familiar to the firm mind, if they are presented to consideration as certainties, and in all their open and declared character; whilst, on the other hand, the bravest have shrunk from the dark and the doubtful. To break off the narrative, when it seemed at the point of becoming most interesting—to extinguish a lamp, just when a parchment containing some hideous secret ought to have been read—to exhibit shadowy forms and half-heard sounds of woe, are resources which Mrs. Radcliffe has employed with more effect than any other writer of romance. It must be confessed, that in order to bring about these situations, some art or contrivance, on the part of the author, is rather too visible. Her heroines voluntarily expose themselves to situations which in nature a lonely female would certainly have avoided. They are too apt to choose the midnight hour for investigating the mysteries of a deserted chamber or secret passage, and generally are only supplied with an expiring lamp, when about to read the most interesting documents. The simplicity of the tale is thus somewhat injured—it is as if we witnessed a dressing-up of the very phantom by which we are to be startled; and the imperfection, though redeemed by many beauties, did not escape the censure of criticism.

A principal characteristic of Mrs. Radcliffe's romances is the rule which the author imposed upon herself, that all the circumstances of her narrative, however mysterious, and apparently superhuman, were to be accounted for on natural principles, at the winding up of the story. It must be allowed, that this has not been done with uniform success, and that the author has been occasionally more successful in exciting interest and apprehension, than in giving either interest or dignity of explanation to the means she has made use of. Indeed, we have already noticed, as the torment of romance-writers, those necessary evils, the concluding chapters, when they must unravel the skein of adventures which they have been so industrious to perplex, and account for all the incidents which they have been at so much

pains to render unaccountable. Were these great magicians, who deal in the wonderful and fearful, permitted to dismiss their spectres as they raise them, amidst the shadowy and indistinct light so favourable to the exhibition of phantasmagoria, without compelling them into broad daylight, the task were comparatively easy, and the fine fragment of *Sir Bertrand* might have rivals in that department. But the modern author is not permitted to escape in that way. We are told of a formal old judge before whom evidence was tendered, of the ghost of a murdered person having declared to a witness that the prisoner at the bar was guilty: the judge admitted the evidence of the spirit to be excellent, but denied his right to be heard through the mouth of another, and ordered the spectre to be summoned into open court. The public of the current day deal as rigidly, in moving for a *quo warranto* to compel an explanation from the story-teller; and the author must either at once represent the knot as worthy of being severed by supernatural aid, and bring on the stage his actual fiend or ghost, or, like Mrs. Radcliffe, explain by natural agency the whole marvels of his story.

We have already, in some brief remarks on *The Castle of Otranto*, avowed some preference for the more simple mode, of boldly avowing the use of supernatural machinery.[1] Ghosts and

[1] ["We disapprove of the mode introduced by Mrs. Radcliffe, and followed by Mr. Murphy and her other imitators, of winding up their story with a solution, by which all the incidents appearing to partake of the mystic and marvellous, are resolved by very simple and natural causes. This seems to us to savour of the precaution of Snug the joiner; or rather, it is as if the machinist, when the pantomime was over, should turn his scenes 'the seamy side without,' and expose the mechanical aids by which his delusions were accomplished. In one respect, indeed, it is worse management, because the understanding spectator might be in some degree gratified by the view of engines, which, however rude, were well adapted to produce the effects which he had witnessed. But the machinery of *The Castle of Montorio*, when exhibited, is wholly inadequate to the gigantic operations ascribed to it. There is a total and absolute disproportion between the cause and effect, which must disgust every reader much more than if he were left under the delusion of ascribing the whole to supernatural agency. This latter resource has indeed many disadvantages, some of which we shall briefly notice. But it is an admitted expedient; appeals to the belief of all ages but our own; and still produces, when well managed, some effect even upon those who are most disposed to contemn its influence. We can, therefore, allow of supernatural agency to a certain extent, and for an appropriate purpose; but we never can consent that the effect of such agency shall be finally attributed to natural causes totally inadequate to its production. We can believe, for example, in Macbeth's witches, and tremble at their spells; but had we been informed, at the conclusion of the piece, that they were only three of his wife's chambermaids disguised for the purpose of imposing on the Thane's credulity, it would have added little to the credibility of the story, and entirely deprived it of the interest. In like manner we fling back upon the Radcliffe school their flat and ridiculous

witches, and the whole tenets of superstition, having once, and at no late period, been matter of universal belief, warranted by legal authority, it would seem no great stretch upon the reader's credulity to require him, while reading of what his ancestors did, to credit for the time what those ancestors devoutly believed in. And yet, notwithstanding the success of Walpole and Maturin (to whom we may add the author of *Forman*), the management of such machinery must be acknowledged a task of a most delicate nature. "There is but one step," said Bonaparte, "betwixt the sublime and the ridiculous;" and in an age of universal incredulity, we must own it would require, at the present day, the support of the highest powers, to save the supernatural from slipping into the ludicrous. The *Incredulus odi* is a formidable objection.

There are some modern authors, indeed, who have endeavoured, ingeniously enough, to compound betwixt ancient faith and modern incredulity. They have exhibited phantoms, and narrated prophecies strangely accomplished, without giving a defined or absolute opinion, whether these are to be referred to supernatural agency, or whether the apparitions were produced (no uncommon case) by an overheated imagination, and the presages apparently verified by a casual, though singular, coincidence of circumstances.[1] This is, however, an evasion of the difficulty, not a solution; and besides, it would be leading us too far from the present subject, to consider to what point the author of a fictitious narrative is bound by his charter to gratify the curiosity of the public, and whether, as a painter of actual life, he is not entitled to leave something in shade, when the natural course of events conceals so many incidents in total

explanations, and plainly tell them, that they must either confine themselves to ordinary and natural events, or find adequate causes for those horrors and mysteries in which they love to involve us."—*Quarterly Review*, May, 1810.]

[1] ["Enthusiastic feelings of an impressive and solemn nature occur both in private and public life, which seem to add ocular testimony to an intercourse betwixt earth and the world beyond it. For example, the son who has been lately deprived of his father feels a sudden crisis approach, in which he is anxious to have recourse to his sagacious advice, or a bereaved husband earnestly desires again to behold the form of which the grave has deprived him for ever—or, to use a darker, yet very common instance, the wretched man who has dipt his hand in his fellow-creature's blood, is haunted by the apprehension that the phantom of the slain stands by the bedside of his murderer. In all, or any of these cases, who shall doubt that imagination, favoured by circumstances, has power to summon up to the organ of sight spectres which only exist in the minds of those by whom their apparition seems to be witnessed?"—Sir Walter Scott's *Demonology*, pp. 5, 6.]

darkness. Perhaps, upon the whole, this is the most artful mode of terminating such a tale of wonder, as it forms the means of compounding with the taste of two different classes of readers; those who, like children, demand that each particular circumstance and incident of the narrative shall be fully accounted for; and the more imaginative class, who, resembling men that walk for pleasure through a moonlight landscape, are more teased than edified by the intrusive minuteness with which some well-meaning companion disturbs their reveries, divesting stock and stone of the shadowy semblances in which fancy had dressed them, and pertinaciously restoring to them the ordinary forms and commonplace meanness of reality.[1]

It may indeed be claimed as meritorious in Mrs. Radcliffe's mode of expounding her mysteries, that it is founded in possibilities. Many situations have occurred, highly tinctured with romantic incident and feeling, the mysterious obscurity of which has afterwards been explained by deception and confederacy. Such have been the impostures of superstition in all ages, and such delusions were also practised by the members of the Secret

[1] ["Of this justly celebrated woman, the principal object seems to have been to raise powerful emotions of surprise, awe, and especially terror, by means and agents apparently supernatural. To effect this, she places her characters, and transports her readers, amid scenes which are calculated strongly to excite the mind, and to predispose it for spectral illusion: Gothic castles, gloomy abbeys, subterraneous passages, the haunts of banditti, the sobbing of the wind, and the howling of the storm, are all employed for this purpose; and, in order that these may have their full effect, the principal character in her romances is always a lovely and unprotected female, encompassed with snares, and surrounded by villains. But that in which the works of Mrs. Radcliffe chiefly differ from those by which they are preceded, is, that in the *Castle of Otranto* and *Old English Baron*, the machinery is in fact supernatural, whereas the means and agents employed by Mrs. Radcliffe are in reality human, and such as can be, or at least are professed to be, explained by natural events. By these means she certainly excites a very powerful interest, as the reader meanwhile experiences the full impression of the wonderful and terrific appearances; but there is one defect which attends this mode of composition, and which seems indeed to be inseparable from it. As it is the intention of the author, that the mysteries should be afterwards cleared up, they are all mountains in labour; and even when she is successful in explaining the marvellous circumstances which have occurred, we feel disappointed that we should have been so agitated by trifles. But the truth is, they never are properly explained; and the author, in order to raise strong emotions of fear and horror in the body of the work, is tempted to go lengths, to account for which the subsequent explanations seem utterly inadequate. Thus, for example, after all the wonder and dismay, and terror and expectation, excited by the mysterious chamber in the castle of Udolpho, how much are we disappointed and disgusted to find, that all this pother has been raised by a waxen statue! In short, we may say, not only of Mrs. Radcliffe's castles, but of her works in general, that they abound 'in *passages* that lead to nothing.'"—Dunlop's *History of Fiction*, vol. iii., p. 385-6].

Tribunal, in the middle ages, and in more modern times by the Rosicrucians and Illuminati, upon whose machinations Schiller has founded the fine romance of *The Ghost-Seer*. But Mrs. Radcliffe has not had recourse to so artificial a solution. Her heroines often sustain the agony of fear, and her readers that of suspense, from incidents which, when explained, appear of an ordinary and trivial nature; and in this we do not greatly applaud her art. A stealthy step behind the arras may doubtless, in some situations, and when the nerves are tuned to a certain pitch, have no small influence upon the imagination; but if the conscious listener discovers it to be only the noise made by the cat, the solemnity of the feeling is gone, and the visionary is at once angry with his senses for having been cheated, and with his reason for having acquiesced in the deception.[1] We fear that some such feeling of disappointment and displeasure attends most readers, when they read for the first time the unsatisfactory solution of the mysteries of the black pall and the wax figure, which has been adjourned from chapter to chapter, like something suppressed, because too horrible for the ear.

There is a separate inconvenience attending a narrative where the imagination has been long kept in suspense, and is at length imperfectly gratified by an explanation falling short of what the reader has expected; for, in such a case, the interest terminates on the first reading of the volumes, and cannot, so far as it rests upon a high degree of excitation, be recalled upon a second perusal. A plan of narrative, happily complicated and ingeniously resolved, continues to please after many readings; for, although the interest of eager curiosity is no more, it is supplied by the rational pleasure, which admires the author's art, and traces a thousand minute passages, which render the catastrophe probable, yet escape notice in the eagerness of a first perusal. But it is otherwise, when some inadequate cause is assigned for a strong emotion; the reader feels tricked, and as in the case of a child who has once seen the scenes of a theatre too nearly, the idea of pasteboard, cords, and pullies destroys for ever the

[1] By a singular coincidence, the late lamented author of *Don Juan* has introduced this very idea into the last canto of that poem.

["The ghost, if ghost it were, seem'd a sweet soul
As ever lurk'd beneath a holy hood;
A dimpled chin, a neck of ivory, stole
Forth into something much like flesh and blood;
Back fell the sable frock and dreary cowl,
And they revealed—alas! that e'er they should!
In full, voluptuous, but *not o'er*grown bulk,
The phantom of her frolic Grace—Fitz-Fulke!"]

illusion with which they were first seen from the proper point of view. Such are the difficulties and dilemmas which attend the path of the professed story-teller, who, while it is expected of him that his narrative should be interesting and extraordinary, is neither permitted to explain its wonders, by referring them to ordinary causes, on account of their triteness, nor to supernatural agency, because of its incredibility. It is no wonder that, hemmed in by rules so strict, Mrs. Radcliffe, a mistress of the art of exciting curiosity, has not been uniformly fortunate in the mode of gratifying it.

The best and most admired specimen of her art is the mysterious disappearance of Ludovico, after having undertaken to watch for a night in a haunted apartment; and the mind of the reader is finely wound up for some strange catastrophe, by the admirable ghost-story which he is represented as perusing to amuse his solitude, as the scene closes upon him. Neither can it be denied, that the explanation afforded of this mysterious incident is as probable as romance requires, and in itself completely satisfactory. As this is perhaps the most favourable example of Mrs. Radcliffe's peculiar skill in composition, the incidents of the black veil and the waxen figure may be considered as instances where the explanation falls short of expectation, and disappoints the reader entirely. On the other hand, her art is at once, according to the classical precept, exerted and concealed in the beautiful and impressive passage, where the Marchesa is in the choir of the convent of San Nicolo, contriving with the atrocious Schedoni the murder of Ellena.

"'Avoid violence, if that be possible,' she added, immediately comprehending him, 'but let her die quickly! The punishment is due to the crime.'

"The Marchesa happened, as she said this, to cast her eyes upon the inscription over a confessional, where appeared, in black letters, these awful words, 'GOD *hears thee!*' It appeared an awful warning; her countenance changed; it had struck upon her heart. Schedoni was too much engaged by his own thoughts to observe, or understand her silence. She soon recovered herself; and, considering that this was a common inscription for confessionals, disregarded what she had at first considered as a peculiar admonition; yet some moments elapsed before she could renew the subject.

"'You were speaking of a place, father,' resumed the Marchesa—'you mentioned a——'

"'Ay,' muttered the confessor, still musing—'in a chamber of that house there is——'

"'What noise is that?' said the Marchesa, interrupting him. They listened. A few low and querulous notes of the organ sounded at a distance, and stopped again.

"'What mournful music is that?' said the Marchesa, in a faltering voice; 'it was touched by a fearful hand! Vespers were over long ago?'

"'Daughter,' said Schedoni, somewhat sternly, 'you said you had a man's courage. Alas! you have a woman's heart.'

"'Excuse me, father; I know not why I feel this agitation, but I will command it.—That chamber?'

"'In that chamber,' resumed the confessor, 'is a secret door, constructed long ago.'

"'And for what purpose constructed?' said the fearful Marchesa.

"'Pardon me, daughter; 'tis sufficient that it is there; we will make a good use of it. Through that door—in the night—when she sleeps——'

"'I comprehend you,' said the Marchesa, 'I comprehend you. But why—you have your reasons, no doubt—but why the necessity of a secret door in a house which you say is so lonely—inhabited by only one person?'

"'A passage leads to the sea,' continued Schedoni, without replying to the question. 'There, on the shore, when darkness covers it; there, plunged amidst the waves, no stain shall hint of——'

"'Hark!' interrupted the Marchesa, starting, 'that note again!'

"The organ sounded faintly from the choir, and paused, as before. In the next moment, a slow chanting of voices was heard, mingling with the rising peal, in a strain particularly melancholy and solemn.

"'Who is dead?' said the Marchesa, changing countenance: 'it is a requiem!'

"'Peace be with the departed!' exclaimed Schedoni, and crossed himself; 'peace rest with his soul!'

"'Hark! to that chant,' said the Marchesa, in a trembling voice; 'it is a first requiem; the soul has but just quitted the body!'

"They listened in silence. The Marchesa was much affected; her complexion varied at every instant; her breathings were short and interrupted, and she even shed a few tears, but they were those of despair, rather than of sorrow."

Mrs. Radcliffe's powers, both of language and description, have been justly estimated very highly. They bear, at the same time, considerable marks of that warm, and somewhat exuberant imagination, which dictated her works. Some artists are distinguished by precision and correctness of outline, others by the force and vividness of their colouring; and it is to the latter class that this author belongs. The landscapes of Mrs. Radcliffe are far from equal in accuracy and truth to those of her contemporary, Mrs. Charlotte Smith, whose sketches are so very graphical, that an artist would find little difficulty in actually painting from them. Those of Mrs. Radcliffe, on the contrary, while they would supply the most noble and vigorous ideas for producing a general effect, would leave the task of tracing a distinct and accurate outline to the imagination of the painter. As her story

is usually enveloped in mystery, so there is, as it were, a haze over her landscapes, softening indeed the whole, and adding interest and dignity to particular parts, and thereby producing every effect which the author desired, but without communicating any absolutely precise or individual image to the reader. The beautiful description of the Castle of Udolpho, upon Emily's first approach to it, is of this character. It affords a noble subject for the pencil: but were six artists to attempt to embody it upon canvass, they would probably produce six drawings entirely dissimilar to each other, yet all of them equally authorised by the printed description, which, although a long one, is so beautiful a specimen of Mrs. Radcliffe's peculiar talents, that we do not hesitate to insert it.

"Towards the close of the day, the road wound into a deep valley. Mountains, whose shaggy steeps appeared to be inaccessible, almost surrounded it. To the east, a vista opened, and exhibited the Apennines in their darkest horrors; and the long perspective of retiring summits rising over each other, their ridges clothed with pines, exhibited a stronger image of grandeur, than any that Emily had yet seen. The sun had just sunk below the top of the mountains she was descending, whose long shadow stretched athwart the valley, but his sloping rays, shooting through an opening of the cliffs, touched with a yellow gleam the summits of the forest that hung upon the opposite steeps, and streamed in full splendour upon the towers and battlements of a castle that spread its extensive ramparts along the brow of a precipice above. The splendour of these illumined objects was heightened by the contrasted shade which involved the valley below.

"'There,' said Montoni, speaking for the first time in several hours, 'is Udolpho.'

"Emily gazed with melancholy awe upon the castle, which she understood to be Montoni's; for, though it was now lighted up by the setting sun, the Gothic greatness of its features, and its mouldering walls of dark grey stone, rendered it a gloomy and sublime object. As she gazed, the light died away on its walls, leaving a melancholy purple tint, which spread deeper and deeper, as the thin vapour crept up the mountain, while the battlements above were still tipped with splendour. From these, too, the rays soon faded, and the whole edifice was invested with the solemn duskiness of evening. Silent, lonely, and sublime, it seemed to stand the sovereign of the scene, and to frown defiance on all who dared to invade its solitary reign. As the twilight deepened, its features became more awful in obscurity, and Emily continued to gaze, till its clustering towers were alone seen rising over the tops of the woods, beneath whose thick shade the carriages soon after began to ascend.

"The extent and darkness of these tall woods awakened terrific images in her mind, and she almost expected to see banditti start up from under the trees. At length the carriages emerged upon

a heathy rock, and soon after reached the castle gates, where the deep tone of the portal bell, which was struck upon to give notice of their arrival, increased the fearful emotions that had assailed Emily. While they waited till the servant within should come to open the gates, she anxiously surveyed the edifice; but the gloom that overspread it, allowed her to distinguish little more than a part of its outline, with the massy walls of the ramparts, and to know that it was vast, ancient, and dreary. From the parts she saw, she judged of the heavy strength and extent of the whole. The gateway before her, leading into the courts, was of gigantic size, and was defended by two round towers, crowned by overhanging turrets, embattled, where, instead of banners, now waved long grass and wild plants, that had taken root among the mouldering stones, and which seemed to sigh, as the breeze rolled past, over the desolation around them. The towers were united by a curtain, pierced and embattled also, below which appeared the pointed arch of a huge portcullis, surmounting the gates: from these, the walls of the ramparts extended to other towers, overlooking the precipice, whose shattered outline, appearing on a gleam that lingered in the west, told of the ravages of war.—Beyond these all was lost in the obscurity of evening."

We think it interesting to compare this splendid and beautiful fancy-picture with the precision displayed by the same author's pencil, when she was actually engaged in copying nature, and probably the reader will be of opinion, that *Udolpho* is an exquisite effect-piece, *Hardwick* a striking and faithful portrait.

"Northward, beyond London, we may make one stop, after a country, not otherwise necessary to be noticed, to mention Hardwick, in Derbyshire, a seat of the Duke of Devonshire, once the residence of the Earl of Shrewsbury, to whom Elizabeth deputed the custody of the unfortunate Mary. It stands on an easy height, a few miles to the left of the road from Mansfield to Chesterfield, and is approached through shady lanes, which conceal the view of it, till you are on the confines of the park. Three towers of hoary grey then rise with great majesty among old woods, and their summits appear to be covered with the lightly shivered fragments of battlements, which, however, are soon discovered to be perfectly carved open work, in which the letters E. S. frequently occur under a coronet, the initials, and the memorials of the vanity, of Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury, who built the present edifice. Its tall features, of a most picturesque tint, were finely disclosed between the luxuriant woods and over the lawns of the park, which every now and then let in a glimpse of the Derbyshire hills. The scenery reminded us of the exquisite descriptions of Harewood.

"The deep embowering shades that veil Elfrida and those of Hardwick, once veiled a form as lovely as the ideal graces of the poet, and conspired to a fate more tragical than that which Harewood witnessed.

"In front of the great gates of the castle court, the ground, adorned by old oaks, suddenly sinks to a darkly shadowed glade,

and the view opens over the vale of Scarsdale, bounded by the wild mountains of the Peak. Immediately to the left of the present residence, some ruined features of the ancient one, enwreathed with the rich drapery of ivy, give an interest to the scene, which the later, but more historical structure, heightens and prolongs. We followed, not without emotion, the walk which Mary had so often trodden, to the folding-doors of the great hall, whose lofty grandeur, aided by silence, and seen under the influence of a lowering sky, suited the temper of the whole scene. The tall windows, which half subdue the light they admit, just allowed us to distinguish the large figures in the tapestry, above the oak wainscoting, and showed a colonnade of oak supporting a gallery along the bottom of the hall, with a pair of gigantic elk's horns flourishing between the windows opposite to the entrance. The scene of Mary's arrival, and her feelings upon entering this solemn shade, came involuntarily to the mind; the noise of horses' feet, and many voices from the court; her proud, yet gentle and melancholy look, as, led by my Lord Keeper, she passed slowly up the hall; his somewhat obsequious, yet jealous and vigilant air, while, awed by her dignity and beauty, he remembers the terrors of his own queen; the silence and anxiety of her maids, and the bustle of the surrounding attendants.

"From the hall, a staircase ascends to the gallery of a small chapel, in which the chairs and the cushions used by Mary still remain, and proceeds to the first story, where only one apartment bears memorials of her imprisonment—the bed, tapestry, and chairs having been worked by herself. This tapestry is richly embossed with emblematic figures, each with its title worked above it, and, having been scrupulously preserved, is still entire and fresh.

"Over the chimney of an adjoining dining-room, to which, as well as to other apartments on this floor, some modern furniture has been added, is this motto carved in oak:—

"'There is only this: To fear God, and keep his Commandments.' So much less valuable was timber than workmanship, when this mansion was constructed, that, where the staircases are not of stone, they are formed of solid oaken steps, instead of planks; such is that from the second, or state story, to the roof, whence, on clear days, York and Lincoln Cathedrals are said to be included in the extensive prospect. This second floor is that which gives its chief interest to the edifice. Nearly all the apartments of it were allotted to Mary; some of them for state purposes; and the furniture is known by other proof than its appearance, to remain as she left it. The chief room, or that of audience, is of uncommon loftiness, and strikes by its grandeur, before the veneration and tenderness arise, which its antiquities, and the plainly told tale of the sufferings they witnessed, excite."[1]

The contrast of these two descriptions will satisfy the reader,

[1] *Journey through Holland and the Western Frontier of Germany, with a Return down the Rhine.* To which are added, *Observations during a Tour to the Lakes of Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland.* By Ann Radcliffe. 4to, 1795, p. 371.

that Mrs. Radcliffe knew as well how to copy nature, as when to indulge imagination. The towers of Udolpho are undefined, boundless, and wreathed in mist and obscurity; the ruins of Hardwick are as fully and boldly painted, but with more exactness of outline, and perhaps less warmth and magnificence of colouring.

It is singular, that though Mrs. Radcliffe's beautiful descriptions of foreign scenery, composed solely from the materials afforded by travellers, collected and embodied by her own genius, were marked in a particular degree (to our thinking at least) with the characteristics of fancy-portraits; yet many of her contemporaries conceived them to be exact descriptions of scenes which she had visited in person. One report, transmitted to the public by the *Edinburgh Review,* stated that Mr. and Mrs. Radcliffe had visited Italy; that Mr. Radcliffe had been attached to one of the British embassies in that country; and that it was there his gifted consort imbibed the taste for picturesque scenery, for mouldering ruins, and for the obscure and gloomy anecdotes which tradition relates of their former inhabitants. This is so far a mistake, as Mrs. Radcliffe never was in Italy; but we have already mentioned the probability of her having availed herself of the acquaintance she formed in 1793 with the magnificent scenery on the banks of the Rhine, and the frowning remains of feudal castles with which it abounds. The inaccuracy of the reviewer is of no great consequence; but a more absurd report found its way into print, namely, that Mrs. Radcliffe, having visited the fine old Gothic mansion of Haddon House, had insisted upon remaining a night there, in the course of which she had been inspired with all that enthusiasm for Gothic residences, hidden passages, and mouldering walls, which marks her writings. Mrs. Radcliffe, we are assured, never saw Haddon House; and although it was a place excellently worth her attention, and could hardly have been seen by her without suggesting some of those ideas in which her imagination naturally revelled, yet we should suppose the mechanical aid to invention—the recipe for fine writing—the sleeping in a dismantled and unfurnished old house, was likely to be rewarded with nothing but a cold, and was an affectation of enthusiasm to which Mrs. Radcliffe would have disdained to have recourse.

The warmth of imagination which Mrs. Radcliffe manifests, was naturally connected with an inclination towards poetry, and accordingly songs, sonnets, and pieces of fugitive verse, amuse and relieve the reader in the course of her volumes. These

are not, in this place, the legitimate subject of criticism;[1] but it may be remarked, that they display more liveliness and richness of fancy, than correctness of taste, or felicity of expression. The language does not become pliant in Mrs. Radcliffe's hands; and, unconscious of this defect, she has attempted, nevertheless, to bend it into new structures of verse, for which the English is not adapted. The song of the glow-worm is an experiment of this nature. It must also be allowed, that the imagination of the author sometimes carries her on too fast, and that if she herself formed a competent and perfect idea of what she meant to express, she has sometimes failed to convey it to the reader. At other and happier times, her poetry partakes of the rich and beautiful colouring which distinguishes her prose composition, and has, perhaps, the same fault, of not being in every case quite precise in expressing the meaning of the author. The following address to Melancholy may be fairly selected as a specimen of her powers.

" Spirit of love and sorrow—hail!
Thy solemn voice from far I hear,
Mingling with evening's dying gale:
Hail, with this sadly-pleasing tear!

" O! at this still, this lonely hour,
Thine own sweet hour of closing day,
Awake thy lute, whose charmful power
Shall call up fancy to obey;

" To paint the wild romantic dream,
That meets the poet's musing eye,
As on the bank of shadowy stream
He breathes to her the fervid sigh.

" O lonely spirit! let thy song
Lead me through all thy sacred haunt;
The minster's moonlight aisles along,
Where spectres raise the midnight chaunt.

" I hear their dirges faintly swell!
Then, sink at once in silence drear,
While, from the pillar'd cloister's cell,
Dimly their gliding forms appear!

[1] ["It ought not to be forgotten that there are many elegant pieces of poetry interspersed through the volumes of Mrs. Radcliffe; among which are to be distinguished as exquisitely sweet and fanciful, the *Song to a Spirit*, and *The Sea Nymph, Down, down, a hundred fathom deep;* they might be sung by Shakspeare's Ariel. The true lovers of poetry are almost apt to regret its being brought in as an accompaniment to narrative, where it is generally neglected; for not one in a hundred of those who read and can judge of novels are at all able to appreciate the merits of a copy of verses, and the common reader is always impatient to get on with the story."—Mrs. Barbauld.]

" Lead where the pine-woods wave on high,
Whose pathless sod is darkly seen,
As the cold moon, with trembling eye,
Darts her long beams the leaves between.

" Lead to the mountain's dusky head,
Where, far below, in shades profound,
Wide forests, plains, and hamlets spread,
And sad the chimes of vesper sound.

" Or guide me where the dashing oar
Just breaks the stillness of the vale,
As slow it tracks the winding shore,
To meet the ocean's distant sail:

" To pebbly banks that Neptune laves,
With measured surges, loud and deep,
Where the dark cliff bends o'er the waves,
And wild the winds of autumn sweep.

" There pause at midnight's spectred hour,
And list the long-resounding gale;
And catch the fleeting moonlight's power,
O'er foaming seas and distant sail."

It cannot, we think, be denied, that we have here beautiful ideas expressed in appropriate versification; yet here, as in her prose compositions, the poetess is too much busied with external objects, too anxious to describe the outward accompaniments of melancholy, to write upon the feeling itself; and although the comparison be made at the expense of a favourite author, we cannot help contrasting the poetry we have just inserted with a song, by Fletcher, on a similar subject.

PAS. (*Sings.*) " Hence, all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights
Wherein you spend your folly!
There's nought in this life sweet,
If man were wise to see't,
But only melancholy!

Welcome, folded arms, and fixed eyes,
A sigh that piercing mortifies,
A look that's fasten'd to the ground,
A tongue chain'd up without a sound!
Fountain heads, and pathless groves,
Places which pale passion loves!
Moonlight walks, when all the fowls
Are warmly housed, save bats and owls!
A midnight bell, a parting groan!
These are the sounds we feed upon;
Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy valley,
Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy."

The Nice Valour.

In these last verses the reader may observe that the human feeling of the votary of melancholy, or rather the pale passion itself, is predominant; that our thoughts are of, and with, the pensive wanderer; and that the "fountain heads and pathless groves," like the landscape in a portrait, are only secondary parts of the picture. In Mrs. Radcliffe's verses it is different. The accessaries and accompaniments of melancholy are well described, but they call for so much of our attention, that the feeling itself scarce solicits due regard. We are placed among melancholy objects, but our sadness is reflected from the scene, it is not the growth of our own minds. Something like this may be observed in Mrs. Radcliffe's romances, where our curiosity is too much interested about the evolution of the story, to permit our feelings to be acted upon by the distresses of the hero or heroine. We do not acknowledge them as personal objects of our interest, and, convinced that the authoress will extricate them from their embarrassments, we are more concerned about the course of the story than the feelings or fate of those of whom it is told.

But we must not take farewell of a favourite author with a depreciating sentiment. It may be true, that Mrs. Radcliffe rather walks in fairy-land than in the region of realities, and that she has neither displayed the command of the human passions, nor the insight into the human heart, nor the observation of life and manners, which recommend other authors in the same line.[1] But she has taken the lead in a line of composition, appealing to those powerful and general sources of interest, a latent sense of supernatural awe, and curiosity concerning whatever is hidden and mysterious; and if she has been ever nearly approached in this walk, which we should hesitate to affirm, it is at least certain that she has never been excelled or even equalled.

[1] ["In the writings of Mrs. Radcliffe there is a considerable degree of uniformity and mannerism, which is perhaps the case with all the productions of a strong and original genius. Her heroines too nearly resemble each other, or rather they possess hardly any shade of difference. They have all blue eyes and auburn hair—the form of each of them has 'the airy lightness of a nymph'—they are all fond of watching the setting sun, and catching the purple tints of evening, and the vivid glow or fading splendour of the western horizon. Unfortunately they are all likewise early risers. I say unfortunately, for in every exigency Mrs. Radcliffe's heroines are provided with a pencil and paper, and the sun is never allowed to rise nor set in peace. Like Tilburina in the play, they are 'inconsolable to the minuet in Ariadne,' and in the most distressing circumstances find time to compose sonnets to sunrise, the bat, a sea-nymph, a lily, or a butterfly."—Dunlop's *History of Fiction*, vol. iii., p. 387.]

We have been given to understand, we trust from good authority, that a posthumous work of Mrs. Radcliffe's is likely soon to make its appearance. Come when it will, and contain almost what it may, it must be an acquisition to the public of no common interest.[1]

ALAIN RENE LE SAGE

We must on the present, as on former occasions, commence our biographical sketch of a delightful author, with the vain regret, that we can say little of his private life which can possibly interest the public. The distinguished men of genius, whom, after death, our admiration is led almost to canonise, have the lot of the holy men, who, spending their lives in obscurity, poverty, and maceration, incur contempt, and perhaps persecution, to have shrines built for the protection of their slightest relics, when once they are no more. Like the life of so many of those who have contributed most largely to the harmless enjoyments of mankind, that of Le Sage was laborious, obscure, and supported with difficulty by the precarious reward of his literary exertions.

Alain Rene Le Sage was born in a village near to the town of Vannes, in Britanny, about the year 1668. The profession of his father is not mentioned; but as he bequeathed some property to his son, he could not be of the very lowest rank. Unfortunately he died early, and his son fell under the tutelage of an uncle, so careless of one of the most sacred duties of humanity, that he neglected alike the fortune and education of his ward. The latter defect was in a great measure supplied by the affection of the Père Bochard of the order of the Jesuits, Principal of the College of Vannes, who, interested in the talents displayed by the young Le Sage, took pleasure in cultivating his taste for literature. Our author, however, must have been late in attracting Bochard's notice; for when he came to Paris in 1693, in his twenty-fifth year, his principal object was to prosecute his philosophical studies, with what ultimate view does not appear.

[1] [As this sheet is passing through the press, the editor observes the announcement of the "*Poetical Works of Mrs. Ann Radcliffe*, now first collected, in two volumes, 8vo"; but whether the poetical Romance previously alluded to by Sir Walter Scott is to be included in this publication, does not appear.—May, 1834.]

With good-humour and liveliness, joined to youth, and, it is said, a remarkably handsome person, Le Sage soon felt the influence of the Parisian atmosphere, was much engaged in society, and distinguished by an intrigue with a woman of rank, who shared with him, as his biographer expresses it, her heart and fortune. How this amour terminated we are not told, but one of a better and more virtuous character succeeded. Le Sage became enamoured of a beautiful young woman, the daughter of a joiner in the Rue de la Mortellerie, married her, and, from that period, found his principal happiness in domestic affection. By this union he had three sons, whose fortunes we shall afterwards have occasion to mention, and a daughter, whose filial piety is said to have placed her sole occupation in contributing to the domestic enjoyment of her celebrated parent.

Le Sage continued after his marriage to frequent the circles of Paris, where literary men mingled as guests upon easy terms, and appears to have acquired several sincere and active friends, among whom the Abbé de Lyonne entitled himself not only to the author's personal gratitude, but to that of posterity. He settled upon Le Sage a pension of six hundred livres, and made him, besides, many valuable presents, yet served him much more essentially by directing his attention to Spanish literature, which he was afterwards so singularly to combine with that of his own country.[1]

Danchel, a man of some celebrity, engaged Le Sage in a translation of the *Letters of Aristenetus*, which he caused to be printed at Chartres (though the title bears Rotterdam) in 1695.

The particular circumstances of Spain had given a strong cast of originality to the character of their literature. The close neighbourhood of so many petty kingdoms, so frequently engaged in intestine wars, occasioned numerous individual adventures, which could not have taken place under any one established and extended government. The high romantic character of chivalry which was cherished by the natives, the vicinity of the Moors, who had imported with them the wild, imaginative, and splendid fictions of Araby the Blessed—the fierceness of the Spanish passions of love and vengeance, their thirst of honour, their unsparing cruelty—placed all the materials of romance under the very eye of the author who wished to use

[1] So early as 1704, Le Sage understood the language so well as to give a translation of Avellaneda's *Continuation of Don Quixote*, which gave so much offence to Cervantes.

them. If his characters were gigantic and overstrained in the conception, the writer had his apology in the temper of the nation where his scene was laid; if his incidents were extravagant and improbable, a country in which Castilians and Arragonese, Spaniards and Moors, Mussulmans and Christians, had been at war for so many ages, could furnish historians with real events, which might countenance the boldest flights of the romance. And here it is impossible to avoid remarking, that the French, the gayest people in Europe, have formed their stage on a plan of declamatory eloquence, which all other nations have denounced as intolerable; while the Spaniard, grave, solemn, and stately, was the first to introduce in the theatre all the bustle of lively and complicated intrigue; the flight and the escape, the mask and ladder of ropes, closets, dark-lanterns, trap-doors, and the whole machinery of constant and hurried action; and that with such a profusion of invention, that the Spanish stage forms a mine in which the dramatic authors of almost all other countries have wrought for ages, and are still working, with very slight chance either of failure or detection.

Le Sage was not slow in endeavouring to turn to his own advantage his acquaintance with the Spanish drama. He translated from the original of Don Francisco de Rojas, *Le Traître Puni*. It was not acted, but printed in the year 1700. Another play, *Don Felix de Mendoce*, he translated from Lope de Vega; but this also remained unacted, and was not even printed, until the author published his *Théâtre*, in 1739.

Le Point d'Honneur, another translation from the Spanish, was performed at the Théâtre François, in 1702, without success. The satire turned upon the pedantic punctilios formerly annexed to the discussion of personal "dependences," as they were called, when men quarrelled by the book, and arranged a rencontre according to the rules of logic. This fantastic humour, which, so early as the age of Shakspeare, and Beaumont and Fletcher, had been successfully ridiculed on the English stage, was probably rather too antiquated to be the subject of satire on that of Paris, in the beginning of the eighteenth century. *The Point of Honour* was only twice represented.

In 1707, *Don Cæsar Ursin*, a comedy, translated by Le Sage from the Spanish of Calderon, was acted and condemned at the Théâtre François. To make the author some amends, the same audience received, with the most marked applause, the lively farce entitled *Crispin rival de son Maître*, which Garrick intro-

duced upon the English stage under the title of *Neck or Nothing*. It is uncommon for a dramatic author to be applauded and condemned for two different pieces in the same day; but Le Sage's destiny was even still more whimsical. *Don Cæsar*, we have said, was hissed in the city, and *Crispin* applauded. At a representation before the court, the judgment was reversed—the play was applauded, and the farce condemned without mercy. Time has confirmed the judgment of the Parisians, and annulled that of Versailles.

Le Sage made yet another essay on the regular stage, with his comedy of *Turcaret*, in which he has painted the odious yet ridiculous character of a financier, risen from the lowest order of society by tricks and usury, prodigal of his newly acquired wealth upon a false and extravagant mistress of quality, and refusing to contribute even to relieve the extreme necessity of his wife and near relations. As men of business, and a class so wealthy, the financiers have always possessed interest at court, and that interest seems to have been exerted with success to prevent so odious a personification of their body from appearing on the stage. The embargo was removed by an order of Monseigneur, dated 15th October, 1708. While the play was yet in his portfolio, Le Sage had an opportunity to show how little his temper was that of a courtier. He had been pressed to read his manuscript comedy at the Hotel de Bouillon, at the hour of noon, but was detained till two o'clock by the necessity of attending the decision of a lawsuit in which he was deeply interested. When he at length appeared, and endeavoured to plead his excuse, the Duchess of Bouillon received his apology with coldness, haughtily remarking, he had made the company lose two hours in waiting for his arrival.—"It is easy to make up the loss, madam," replied Le Sage; "I will not read my comedy, and you will thus regain the lost time." He left the hotel, and could never be prevailed on to return thither.

Turcaret was acted, and was successful, in spite of the cabal formed against it by the exertions of those concerned in the finances.[1] The author, in imitation of Molière, added a sort of dramatic criticism, in which he defended the piece against the

[1] ["The French author who, in drawing character, approached the nearest to Molière, was perhaps Le Sage, in his *Turcaret*, which, however, is composed of many reminiscences from his great master. Both, indeed, had the common defect of painting manners, not characters, and, consequently, of producing comedies of classes, not of individuals. But this is a defect which the French public would not even perceive; and we are not aware that any critics of that nation have made the remark."—*Quarterly Review*, July, 1823.]

censures which had been passed against it. The speakers in this critical interlude were Don Cleofas and the Diable Boiteux. They appeared on the stage as unseen spectators of the representation of *Turcaret*, and spoke between the acts, like the assistants in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour;* the tendency of the dialogue being to exult in the author's success, and ridicule the cabal by which it had been assailed. We learn, in the course of their conversation, that besides all the friends of the author, and all his friends' friends, a guard of the police was necessary to restrain the zeal of the clerks and dependents of the financial department. Asmodeus maintains his character as a satirist, and, pointing out to Don Cleofas a violent debate betwixt the friends and enemies of the piece, observes, that as it became warm, the one party spoke worse of the piece than they thought, and the other thought less good of it than they uttered.

Turcaret seems the only original piece which Le Sage composed on the plan of the French regular comedy; and though it had great poignancy of satire, the principal character on which the whole turns, is almost too worthless and too wicked to be ridiculous, or truly comic. Indeed, *Turcaret* is rendered so odious, that revenge was said to have held the pallet when the colours were mixed; and there was an unauthorised story at one time current, that Le Sage, deprived by a financier of a place in the revenue, had written this dramatic satire to be revenged upon the whole body of *Maltôtiers*. The author, probably, was not without some offers of preferment, for he used to speak to his son of having *refused* situations in which others became rich, but where his conscience must have kept him poor—expressions too vague for a biographer to found anything upon them, yet which seem to exclude the idea of his having held any employment under a farmer-general of the revenues. His connection with the Théâtre François, on which alone such regular pieces can be presented, was soon afterwards broken off. Le Sage had offered to them, in 1708, a small piece, in one act, called *La Tontine;* it was not acted until 1732; and though the cause is not precisely known, it is obvious that the rejection gave much offence to the author. Le Sage was also much provoked at the airs of superiority assumed by the performers towards the authors, and he has recorded his revenge by the unfavourable and ridiculous colours in which he has represented the theatrical profession in his romance.

The truth seems to be, that his former attempts were unsuccessful, because they were founded upon the Spanish plan

of intrigue, in incident and situation, and were not therefore much valued by the Parisians, whom the excellent Molière had accustomed to pieces of character and sentiment. *Turcaret* was indeed more in the taste of the age, and was accordingly better relished; but the scenes hang so loosely together, and the plot possesses so little interest of any kind, that it may be termed rather a dramatic satire than a proper comedy. On the whole, Le Sage's failure as a comic poet will not excite the surprise of those who may have patience to peruse his plays.

For the sake of connection, we may trace Le Sage's dramatic career to a period with the greater brevity, that it contains but little to interest the reader. From the service of the established National Theatre, Le Sage transferred his pen to those minor establishments, termed *De la Foire*, which did not pretend, and, indeed, were not permitted, to offer to the public regular dramas, but only to act vaudevilles, or small light interludes set to music, and where the music was supposed to be the principal attraction.

These subordinate theatres were a refinement upon the puppet-shows and such like exhibitions, which used to be shown during the two great Fairs of St. Laurence and St. Germain; and it was under this colour that the manager and actors of the *Foire* endeavoured to elude the monopoly enjoyed by the Théâtre François, and were alternately indulged or restricted in their privileges as they were able to find protection at court. The sort of pieces represented at the *Foire* came at length to bear the name of the Comic Opera, of which Le Sage was the soul. He composed, either entirely, or with the assistance of his friends, Dominique and Fuselier, no less than a hundred and upwards of these interludes, farces, and light pieces, which cost little effort to so inventive a genius, and which floated or sunk as popular opinion willed it, never omitting any opportunity which presented itself, to ridicule, parody, and satirise the *Romans*, for so the actors of the regular theatres were termed, in the cant language of the *Foire*. These exertions were attended with such a degree of profit, as, with the revenue arising from his other publications, enabled Le Sage, now the father of a family, to maintain himself and them in a calm and modest, but comfortable independence.

In 1721, the Comic Opera of the *Foire* was for a time suppressed. An attempt was made to continue the amusement, and elude the restriction, under different devices. For this purpose Francisque, the manager, for whom Le Sage had long

laboured, caused pieces, composed in monologue, to be acted on his stage. Le Sage and Fuselier, late the allies of Francisque, had recourse to another device, and acted their pieces as formerly, in music and dialogue, but by the intervention of puppets, instead of real actors—an idea which afterwards occurred to Fielding. These rival theatres carried on their several undertakings, in spite both of the comedians of the Théâtre François, and of each other, and some satirical skirmishes passed between them. In *Arlequin Deucalion,* a piece in monologue, written by the celebrated Piron, Le Sage and his consort Fuselier are subjected to ridicule by the following *jeu de mots :* Punchinello is made to ask, " *Pourquoi le fol de temps en temps ne diroit-il pas des bonnes choses, puisque* LE SAGE *de temps en temps dit de si mauvaises ?*" In the same piece, Arlequin throws a pair of pistols into the sea, praying there might never more be word spoken " *de pistolets, de fusil, ni de* FUSELIER." Such jests break no bones, and probably discomposed our author's temper as little as they injured his reputation. The embargo was removed from the performances at the *Foire* in the course of about two years, and our author resumed his ordinary labours in behalf of its theatre, which he continued so late as the year 1738, during which he produced three pieces, which were probably his last dramatic efforts, as he had then attained his seventieth year.

It has been said of Le Sage's works, that no writings are more generally and widely known, than those of his which are remembered, while none are so decidedly and utterly forgotten as those which have been consigned to neglect. All the slight dramas which we have noticed, as forming so great and essential a part of the labours of his life, fall under the latter class—many have never been printed, and of those which have issued from the press, very few are now read. Nothing can be more slight than their texture. The whim of the day—any remarkable accident—any popular publication, affords a hint for the story. The airs, like those of the *Beggars' Opera,* are founded on the common popular ballads and vaudevilles, and nothing is too trivial or absurd to be admitted into the dialogue. At the same time, there occur touches both of wit, nature, and humour; as how could it be otherwise in the slightest works of Le Sage? The French critics, who are indisputably the best judges, incline to think, judging from *Turcaret,* that he would have risen to eminence had he continued to cultivate the regular comedy, instead of sinking into the minor and subordinate ranks

of an occupation which he held in contempt, and which he probably thought could not be too slightly executed. Don Cleofas, in the *Critique de Turcaret*, says to Asmodeus, as they survey the audience at the Théâtre François, "*La belle assemblée; que de dames!*—ASMODEE. *Il y en auroit encore d'avantage, sans les spectacle de la Foire. La plupart de femmes y courent avec fureur. Je suis ravi de les voir dans le gout de leurs lacquais et de leurs cochers.*"—Thus thought Le Sage originally of the dignity of those labours in which he was to spend his life, and the indifference with which he was contented to exercise his vocation, shows that his opinion of its importance was never enhanced. Goldoni, in circumstances nearly similar, created a national drama, and a taste for its beauties; but Le Sage was to derive an undying name from works of a different description.

We willingly leave consideration of these ephemeral and forgotten effusions of the moment, composed for the small theatre of the *Foire*, to speak of the productions which must afford delight and interest so long as human nature retains its present constitution. The first of these was *Le Diable Boiteux*, which Le Sage published in 1707. The title and plan of the work were derived from the Spanish of Luez Valez de Guevara, called *El Diablo Cojuelo*, and such satires on manners as had been long before written in Spain by Cervantes and others. But the fancy, the lightness, the spirit, the wit, and the vivacity of the *Diable Boiteux*, were entirely communicated by the enchanting pen of the lively Frenchman. The plan of the work was in the highest degree interesting; and having, in its original concoction, at once a cast of the romantic and of the mystical, is calculated to interest and to attract by its own merit, as well as by the pleasing anecdotes and shrewd remarks upon human life, of which it forms, as it were, the frame-work and enchasing. The Mysteries of the Cabalists afforded a foundation for the story, which, grotesque as it is, was not in those times held to exceed the bounds of probable fiction; and the interlocutors of the scene are so happily adapted to the subjects of their conversation, that all they say and do has its own portion of natural appropriation.

It is impossible to conceive a being more fitted to comment upon the vices, and to ridicule the follies of humanity, than an *esprit follet* like Asmodeus, who is as much a decided creation of genius, in his way, as Ariel or Caliban. Without possessing the darker powers and propensities of a Fallen Angel, he presides over the vices and the follies, rather than the crimes of mankind

—is malicious, rather than malignant; and his delight is to gibe, and to scoff, and to tease, rather than to torture; one of Satan's light infantry, in short, whose business is to goad, perplex, and disturb the ordinary train of society, rather than to break in upon and overthrow it. This character is maintained in all Asmodeus says and does, with so much spirit, wit, acuteness, and playful malice, that we never forget the fiend, even in those moments when he is very near becoming amiable as well as entertaining.

Don Cleofas, to whom he makes all his diverting communications, is a fiery young Spaniard, proud, high-spirited, and revengeful, and just so much of a libertine as to fit him for the company of Asmodeus. He interests us personally by his gallantry and generous sentiments; and we are pleased with the mode in which the grateful fiend provides for the future happiness of his liberator. Of these two characters neither is absolutely original. But the Devil of Guevara is a mere bottle-conjurer, who amuses the student by tricks of legerdemain, intermixed with strokes of satire, some of them very acute, but devoid of the poignancy of Le Sage. Don Cleofas is a more literal copy from the Spanish author. There is no book in existence in which so much of the human character, under all its various shades and phases, is described in so few words, as in the *Diable Boiteux*. Every page, every line, bears marks of that sure tact and accurate development of human weakness and folly, which tempt us to think we are actually listening to a Superior Intelligence, who sees into our minds and motives, and, in malicious sport, tears away the veil which we endeavour to interpose betwixt these and our actions. The satire of Le Sage is as quick and sudden as it is poignant; his jest never is blunted by anticipation; ere we are aware that the bow is drawn, the shaft is quivering in the very centre of the mark. To quote examples, would be to quote the work through almost every page; and, accordingly, no author has afforded a greater stock of passages, which have been generally employed as apophthegms, or illustrations of human nature and actions; and no wonder, since the force of whole pages is often compressed in fewer words than another author would have employed sentences. To take the first example that comes: The fiends of Profligacy and Chicane contend for possession and direction of a young Parisian. Pilardoc would have made him a *commis*, Asmodeus a debauchee. To unite both their views, the infernal conclave made the youth a *monk*, and effected a

reconciliation between their contending brethren. "We embraced," says Asmodeus, "and have been mortal enemies ever since." It is well observed by the late editor of Le Sage's works, that the traits of this kind, with which the *Diable Boiteux* abounds, entitle it, much more than the Italian scenes of Gherardi, to the title of the *Grenier a Sel*, conferred on the latter work by the sanction of Boileau. That great poet, nevertheless, is said to have been of a different opinion. He threatened to dismiss a valet whom he found in the act of reading the *Diable Boiteux*. Whether this proceeded from the peevishness of indisposition, under which Boileau laboured in 1707; whether he supposed the knowledge of human life, and all its chicanery, to be learned from Le Sage's satire, was no safe accomplishment for a domestic; or whether, finally, he had private or personal causes for condemning the work and the author, is not now known. But the anecdote forms one example, amongst the many, of the unjust estimation in which men of genius are too apt to hold their contemporaries.

Besides the power of wit and satire displayed in the *Diable Boiteux*, with so much brilliancy, there are passages in which the author assumes a more serious and moral tone; he sometimes touches upon the pathetic, and sometimes even approaches the sublime. The personification of Death is of the latter character, until we come to the point where the author's humour breaks forth, and where, having described one of the terrific phantom's wings as painted with war, pestilence, famine, and shipwreck, he adorns the other with the representation of young physicians taking their degree.

To relieve the reader from the uniformity which might otherwise have attached to the hasty and brief sketches of what is only subjected to the eye, Le Sage has introduced several narratives in the Spanish taste, such as the History of the Count de Belflor, and the novel called the Force of Friendship. Cervantes had set the example of varying a long narrative by the introduction of such novels, or *historiettes*. Scarron and others had followed the plan, but with less propriety than Le Sage, since it must be owned that in a work of which the parts are so unconnected with each other, as in the *Diable Boiteux*, such relief is more appropriate than when the novel serves inartificially to interrupt the progress of a principal story.

The immediate popularity of the *Diable Boiteux* was increased at the time of publication by the general belief that Le Sage, who lived so much in the world, and was so close an observer of

what passed around him, had, under Spanish names, and with fictitious circumstances, recounted many Parisian anecdotes, and drawn many characters of the court and city. Some of these were immediately recognised. The spendthrift Dufresny (supposed to be a descendant of Henry IV. by his grandmother, a female called La Belle Jardiniere d'Anet) was recognised as the old bachelor of rank, who married his laundress, to get rid of her claim. The story of the German baroness, who curled her hair with the promise of marriage made to her by an ardent but imprudent lover, relates to a similar anecdote of the celebrated Ninon de L'Enclos. Baron, the celebrated actor, is the dramatic hero, who dreams that the gods had decreed him an apotheosis, by transforming him into a stage decoration. The celebrated Helvetius was generally supposed to be the original of the sage Sangrado; and doubtless other individuals of the faculty, which Le Sage, like Molière, persecuted with his raillery, were also known. The satire of both authors flowed, perhaps, more freely, that each of them enjoyed a state of good health, which enabled them to set the faculty at defiance, and also because the professional recompense of physicians, on the continent, was so mean as to degrade their character in society, and subject them to all the ridicule which, since the days of Juvenal, has attached to learning in rags.

Besides the personal allusions which we have noticed, there are doubtless many others in the novel which might be easily understood at the time; and the rage for private scandal probably carried the spirit of applying passages in the work to existing persons and circumstances much farther than the writer intended.

The popularity of the *Diable Boiteux* was unbounded at its first appearance, nor has it ever since been abated. The strongest proof of the ardour with which it was received, was, that two young men entering the same bookseller's shop, in which there chanced to be only one copy of the work, contested the possession of it by fighting upon the spot, and the victor having wounded his antagonist, carried off the volume as the prize of the field. Certainly this well-attested anecdote, to which the popularity of Asmodeus gave occasion, deserved to be recorded by the Demon himself. One Dancourt, also a dramatist, who supplied his deficiencies of genius and invention by his promptitude in seizing every topic of popular interest, brought the subject of the *Diable Boiteux* on the stage, in two

parts; the first of which ran for thirty-five nights, the second for seventy-two.

It only remains to be said of this celebrated moral satire, that nineteen years after it had appeared in a single volume, the author published it with augmentations, which increased the work to two. This addition had the usual fate of continuations, and was not, at the time, considered as equal to the original publication; but it would now be difficult to perceive any difference between them. The Dialogues of the Chimneys of Madrid, which were for the first time appended to the *Diable Boiteux* in the new edition just mentioned, were more justly censured as inferior to that celebrated work. The personification itself is a very awkward one, and forms a singular contrast to the unrivalled contrivance by which Don Cleofas acquires the knowledge of the interior of the dwellings of men, and even of the secrets of their bosoms.

The three first volumes of *Gil Blas de Santillane*, comprehending the life of that most excellent person, down to his first retreat to Lirias, raised the fame of Le Sage to the highest pitch, and secured it upon an immovable basis. Few have ever read this charming book without remembering, as one of the most delightful occupations of their life, the time which they first employed in the perusal; and there are few also who do not occasionally turn back to its pages with all the vivacity which attends the recollection of early love. It signifies nothing at what time we have first encountered the fascination; whether in boyhood, when we were chiefly captivated by the cavern of the robbers, and other scenes of romance; whether in more advanced youth, but while our ignorance of the world yet concealed from us the subtle and poignant satire which lurks in so many passages of the work; whether we were learned enough to apprehend the various allusions to history and public matters with which it abounds, or ignorant enough to rest contented with the more direct course of the narration. The power of the enchanter over us is alike absolute under all these circumstances. If there is anything like truth in Gray's opinion, that to lie upon a couch and read new novels was no bad idea of Paradise, how would that beatitude be enhanced, could human genius afford us another *Gil Blas!*

Le Sage's claim to originality, in this delightful work, has been idly, I had almost said ungratefully, contested by those critics, who conceive they detect a plagiarist wherever they see a resemblance in the general subject of a work to one which has

been before treated by an inferior artist. It is a favourite theme of laborious dulness to trace out such coincidences; because they appear to reduce genius of the higher order to the usual standard of humanity, and, of course, to bring the author nearer a level with his critics. It is not the mere outline of a story—not even the adopting some details of a former author, which constitutes the literary crime of plagiarism. The proprietor of the pit from which Chantrey takes his clay might as well pretend a right in the figure into which it is moulded under his plastic fingers; and the question is in both cases the same—not so much from whom the original rude substance came, as to whom it owes that which constitutes its real merit and excellence.

It is therefore no disparagement to Le Sage that long before his time there existed in other countries, and particularly in Spain, that species of fiction to which *Gil Blas* may be in some respects said to belong. There arises in every country a species of low or comic romance, bearing somewhat the same proportion to the grave or heroic romance which farce bears to tragedy. Readers of all countries are not more, if indeed they are equally delighted, with the perusal of high deeds of war and chivalry, achieved by some hero of popular name, than with the exploits of some determined freebooter, who follows his illicit trade by violence, or of some notorious sharper, who preys upon society by address and stratagem. The lowness of such men's character, and the baseness of their pursuits, do not prevent their hazards, their successes, their failures, their escapes, and their subsequent fate, from being deeply interesting, not to the mere common people only, but to all who desire to read a chapter in the great book of human nature. We may use, though not in a moral sense, the oft-quoted phrase of Terence, and acknowledge ourselves interested in the tale, because *we* are *men* and the events are *human*.

In Spain, many of their most ingenious men took pleasure in making studies from low life, as their countryman, Murillo, found the favourite subjects of his pencil among the sun-burnt gipsies, shepherds, and muleteers. Thus the character of the *Picaro*, or Adventurer, had been long a favourite subject in Spanish fiction. *Lazarillo de Tormes* had been written by Juan de Luna; the History of *Paul the Sharper*, by the celebrated Quevedo. Even Cervantes had touched upon such a subject in the novel of *Riconete and Cortadillo*, in which there are some scenes of low life drawn with all the force of his powerful pen.

But *Guznan d'Alfarache* was the most generally known of any of the class, and had been long since translated into most European languages. If *Gil Blas*' history had a prototype among these Spanish stories, it must have probably been in that of Guzman; and some slight resemblance may be discovered betwixt some of the incidents; for instance, the circumstances in which Guzman is about to marry the daughter of a wealthy Genoese, and that of the excellent Don Raphael, in the house of Pedro de Moyadas. In like manner, the incident of that worthy assuming the dress of a dead hermit is anticipated by Lazarillo de Tormes, in the second part of his History; and probably many other resemblances, or, if the reader pleases to call them so, plagiarisms, might be pointed out; for as the author furnished the plots of his dramatic pieces very often at the expense of the Spaniards, there is no probability that he would scruple to borrow from their romances whatever he found suitable to his own purpose.

There has been, indeed, an unauthenticated account of Le Sage having obtained possession of some manuscripts of Cervantes', which he had used liberally, and without acknowledgment, in the construction of his *Gil Blas*. A translation of Le Sage's novels into Spanish bears also on the titlepage the vaunt that this operation has restored them to the language in which they were originally written. But the styles of Cervantes and Le Sage are so essentially different, though each in itself is masterly, that, in the absence of positive evidence, one would as soon be induced to believe that the Frenchman wrote *Don Quixote* as that the Spaniard composed *Gil Blas*. If Le Sage borrowed anything from Spain, excepting some general hints, such as we have noticed, it may have been some of the detached novels, which, as in the *Diable Boiteux*, are interwoven in the history, though with less felicity than in the earlier publication, where they do not interrupt the march of any principal narrative. On the other hand, it is no doubt wonderful that, merely by dint of acquaintance with Spanish literature, Le Sage should have become so perfectly intimate, as he is admitted to be on all hands, with the Spanish customs, manners, and habits, as to conduct his reader through four volumes without once betraying the secret that the work was not composed by a native of Spain. Indeed, it is chiefly on this wonderful observation of costume, and national manners, that the Spanish translator founds his reclamation of the work as the original property of Spain. Le Sage's capacity of identifying

himself with the child of his imagination, in circumstances in which he himself never was placed, though rare in the highest degree, is not altogether singular; De Foe, in particular, possessed it in a most extraordinary degree. It may be added that this strict and accurate attention to costume is confined to externals so far as the principal personage is concerned. Gil Blas, though wearing the Golillo, Capa, and Spada, with the most pure Castilian grace, thinks and acts with all the vivacity of a Frenchman, and displays, in many respects, the peculiar sentiments of one.

The last French editor of Le Sage's works thinks that *Gil Blas* may have had a prototype in the humorous but licentious *History of Francion*, written by the Sieur Moulinet de Parc. I confess I cannot see any particular resemblance which the *History of Gil Blas* has to that work, excepting that the scene of both lies chiefly in ordinary life, as may be said of the *Roman Comique* of Scarron. The whole concoction of *Gil Blas* appears to me as original, in that which constitutes the essence of a composition, as it is inexpressibly delightful.

The principal character, in whose name and with whose commentaries the story is told, is a conception which has never been equalled in fictitious composition, yet which seems so very real that we cannot divest ourselves of the opinion that we listen to the narrative of one who has really gone through the scenes of which he speaks to us. Gil Blas' character has all the weaknesses and inequalities proper to human nature, and which we daily recognise in ourselves and in our acquaintance. He is not by nature such a witty sharper as the Spaniards painted in the characters of Paolo or Guzman, and such as Le Sage himself has embodied in the subordinate sketch of Scipio, but is naturally disposed towards honesty, though with a mind unfortunately too ductile to resist the temptations of opportunity or example. He is constitutionally timid, and yet occasionally capable of doing brave actions; shrewd and intelligent, but apt to be deceived by his own vanity; with wit enough to make us laugh with him at others, and follies enough to turn the jest frequently against himself. Generous, good-natured, and humane, he has virtues sufficient to make us love him, and as to respect, it is the last thing which he asks at his reader's hand. Gil Blas, in short, is the principal character in a moving scene, where, though he frequently plays a subordinate part in the action, all that he lays before us is coloured with his own opinions, remarks, and sensations. We feel the individuality of Gil Blas alike in

the cavern of the robbers, in the episcopal palace of the Archbishop of Grenada, in the bureau of the minister, and in all the other various scenes through which he conducts us so delightfully, and which are, generally speaking, very slightly connected together, or rather no otherwise related to each other than as they are represented to have happened to the same man. In this point of view, the romance is one which rests on character rather than incident; but although there is no main action whatsoever, yet there is so much incident in the episodical narratives that the work can never be said to linger or hang heavy.

The son of the squire of Asturias is intrusted also with the magic wand of the *Diable Boiteux*, and can strip the gilding from human actions with the causticity of Asmodeus himself.[1] Yet, with all this power of satire, the moralist has so much of gentleness and good-humour that it may be said of Le Sage, as of Horace, *Circum præcordia ludit.* All is easy and good-humoured, gay, light, and lively; even the cavern of the robbers is illuminated with a ray of that wit with which Le Sage enlightens his whole narrative. It is a work which renders the reader pleased with himself and with mankind, where faults are placed before him in the light of follies rather than vices, and where misfortunes are so interwoven with the ludicrous that we laugh in the very act of sympathising with them. All is rendered diverting—both the crimes and the retribution which follows them. Thus, for example, Gil Blas, during his prosperity, commits a gross act of filial undutifulness and ingratitude; yet we feel that the intermediation of Master Muscada the grocer, irritating the pride of a *parvenu*, was so exactly calculated to produce the effect which it operated that we continue to laugh with and at Gil Blas, even in the sole instance in which he shows depravity of heart. And then, the lapidation which he undergoes at Oviedo, with the disappointment in all his ambitious hopes of exciting the admiration of the inhabitants of his birthplace, is received as an expiation completely appropriate, and suited to the offence. In short, so strictly are the pages of *Gil Blas* confined to what is amusing that they might perhaps have been improved by some touches of a more masculine, stronger, and firmer line of morality.

[1] [" We venture to be of opinion that there is as much *useful knowledge* in Gil Blas, if the reader be one of those who would have understood the Epitaph of the Licentiate Pedro Garcias, as in any dozen volumes of real history the country of Le Sage has yet produced."—*Quarterly Review*, Sept. 1826.]

It ought not to escape notice, that Le Sage, though, like Cervantes, he considers the human figures which he paints as his principal object, fails not to relieve them by exquisite morsels of landscape, slightly touched indeed, but with the highest keeping, and the most marked effect. The description of the old hermit's place of retreat may be given as an example of what we mean.

In the *History of Gil Blas* is also exhibited that art of fixing the attention of the reader, and creating, as it were, a reality even in fiction itself, not only by a strict attention to costume and locality, but by a minuteness, and at the same time a vivacity of narrative, comprehending many trifling circumstances which might be thought to have escaped every one's memory, excepting that of an actual eye-witness. By such a circumstantial detail, the author has rendered us as well acquainted with the four pavilions and *corps de logis* of Lirias as if we had ourselves dined there with Gil Blas and his faithful follower Scipio. The well-preserved tapestry, as old as the Moorish kingdom of Valencia, the old-fashioned damask chairs —that furniture of so little intrinsic value, which yet made, in its proper place, such a respectable appearance—the dinner, the siesta—all give that closing scene in the third volume such a degree of reality, and assure us so completely of the comfort and happiness of our pleasant companion, that the concluding chapters, in which the hero is dismissed, after his labours and dangers, to repose and happiness—these very chapters, which in other novels are glanced over as matter of course, are perhaps the most interesting in the *Adventures of Gil Blas*. Not a doubt remains on the mind of the reader concerning the continuance of the hero's rural felicity, unless he should happen (like ourselves) to feel some private difficulty in believing that the new cook from Valencia could ever rival Master Joachim's excellence, particularly in the matter of the ollapodrida, and the pig's ears marinated. Indeed, to the honour of that author be it spoken, Le Sage, excellent in describing scenes of all kinds, gives such vivacity to those which interest the *gastronome* in particular that an epicure of our acquaintance used to read certain favourite passages regularly before dinner, with the purpose of getting an appetite like that of the Licentiate Sedillo, and, so far as his friends could observe, the recipe was always successful.

At this happy point the *Adventures of Gil Blas* originally closed; but the excessive popularity of the work induced the author to add the fourth volume, in which Gil Blas is again

brought from his retreat, and of new involved in the perils of a court life. Besides that the author in some degree repeats himself—for Gil Blas' situation under the Conde D'Olivarez is just the counterpart to that which he held under the Duke of Lerma—the Continuation has the usual fault of such works, joins awkwardly with the original story, and is written evidently with less vigour and originality. Its reception from the public, according to a French critic, resembled the admiration given to a decaying beauty, whose features remain the same, though their freshness and brilliancy are abated by time.

Even after the death of Le Sage, it seemed as if his masterpiece was to give rise to as many Continuations as the *History of Amadis*. A spurious *History of Don Alphonzo Blas de Lirias, Son of Gil Blas of Santillane,* pretending to be a posthumous work of the original author, appeared at Amsterdam, and has been since reprinted.

In 1717, Le Sage published a translation, or rather a poor imitation, of Boiardo's *Orlando Inamorato*, which wild and imaginative poem he has degraded into a mere fairy tale, stripping it effectually of the magical colouring which it had received from the original writer. The author intended to have committed the same violence upon Ariosto's splendid epic, but fortunately the consummation of the rash attempt did not take place. The ingenious and lively Frenchman was as completely devoid of the rich poetical fancy of the Tuscan poet, as the language in which he wrote was inadequate to express the beauties of the Italian original.

Le Sage found a more congenial employment in compiling the *Adventures of the Chevalier de Beauchene*, a brave sea-officer, or rather corsair—the Paul Jones of that period, in the West Indian seas. He professed to have derived the materials of this work, which was never completed, from the widow of the Chevalier, who resided at Tours. Le Sage has well supported the character of the frank, bold, half-civilised sailor, but apparently found the task troublesome, if we may judge from the numerous episodes which he has ingrafted on the principal story. Probably the work did not become popular, for though a Continuation was in some degree promised, it never appeared. The *Chevalier de Beauchene* came out in 1732, and in the same year Le Sage published a translation, or rather an abridgment, of the *Adventures of Guzman d'Alfarache*, the most celebrated of the Spanish romances *à la picaresque*.

In 1734, Le Sage translated the *History of Vanillo Gonzales*,

called the Merry Bachelor, from the Spanish of Vincentio Espinella.

Apparently these subordinate labours had renewed the author's taste for original composition. The *Bachelor of Salamanca* was his last work of this description; and although we can easily descry the flatness and insipidity which indicate the approach of age, and the decay of the finer powers of observation and expression, we are nevertheless ever and anon reminded of that genius which in its vigour produced *Gil Blas* and the *Diable Boiteux*. *The Bachelor of Salamanca* is, in comparison, a failure, but such as Le Sage alone could have committed; and many passages have all that raciness which distinguishes his happier productions. The scene, for example, in which Carambola is employed in reading to slumber the Member of the Council of the Indies, who unpitiably awakens at every instant when his reader stops to take a mouthful of refreshment, might have been told by Asmodeus himself. It must be owned that the scenes laid in Mexico have little merit of any kind. Le Sage had not the same accurate knowledge of the manners of New Spain which he possessed respecting those of the mother country, and the account with which he presents us is in proportion flat and uninteresting. If it be true that Le Sage, jealous, like other old authors, of the earlier productions of his genius, preferred this work—the child of his old age, to his *Diable Boiteux* and *Gil Blas*, we can only say, that the same decay which is visible in his talents must have also affected his taste, and that he certainly had not invoked the assistance of the acute Asmodeus when he formed his opinion.

After the *Bachelor of Salamanca*, Le Sage produced, in 1740, his last original work, *La Valise Trouvée*, which appeared anonymously in that year. His last labours thus approached the character of those with which he opened his career; for the *Valise Trouvée* consists of a miscellaneous collection of letters upon various subjects, resembling those of Aristenetus, translated by our author in 1695.[1]

A lively Collection of Anecdotes and Witticisms, published in 1743, closed the long labours of this excellent author. They are told with all the animation of his own particular humour, and we may suppose them to have been amassed in his portfolio, with the purpose of being one day amalgamated into a regular work,

[1] [The *Valise Trouvée* has been closely imitated in Mr. Moore's *Twopenny Postbag:* it contains a description of the tricks of booksellers in puffing romances into notice, which shows how little some things have altered since Le Sage wrote. 1834.]

but given to the public in their present unconnected form, when age induced Le Sage, now in his seventy-fifth year, to lay aside his pen.

Having thus reviewed hastily the various literary labours of Le Sage, we have, in fact, nearly accomplished the history of his life, which appears to have been spent in the bosom of his family, and to have been diversified by no incident of peculiarity unconnected with his theatrical and literary engagements. His taste for retirement was, perhaps, increased by the infirmity of deafness, which attacked him so early as 1709, for he alludes to it in the critical interlude on the subject of *Turcaret*. Latterly, it increased so much that he was under the necessity of constantly using a hearing-trumpet. His conversation was nevertheless so delightful that, when he went to his favourite coffee-house, in the Rue Saint Jacques, the guests formed a circle round him, nay, even mounted upon the seats and upon the tables, in order to catch the remarks and anecdotes which this celebrated observer of human nature could tell in society, with the same grace and effect with which he recorded them in his works.

Le Sage's circumstances, though very moderate, seem always to have been easy, and his domestic life was quiet and happy. Its tenor was somewhat interrupted by the taste which carried upon the stage his eldest and youngest sons. Nothing could be more natural than that the theatrical art should have invincible charms for the sons of a dramatic author; but Le Sage, who had expressed the greatest contempt and dislike of that profession, which he had painted in the most ridiculous and odious colours, felt great pain from his sons making choice of it, which probably was not lessened when the eldest obtained an honourable station among those very Romans of the Théâtre François with whom his father had waged for so many years a satirical war. This eldest son of Le Sage was a youth of great hopes, and a most amiable disposition. He had been educated for the bar. Upon embracing the profession of a comedian, he assumed the name of Montmenil, under which he became distinguished for his excellence in the parts of valets, peasants, and other characters in low comedy. He was not less remarked for the worth of his private character, and his talents for society; and having early attained a situation in the Théâtre François, he mixed with the best company in Paris. Yet his father could not for a long time hear of Montmenil's professional merit, or even of his private virtues, and the general respect in which he was held, without showing evident symptoms of great and painful emotion. At

length a reconciliation was effected betwixt them, and, passing from displeasure to the most affectionate excess of parental fondness, it is said Le Sage could scarce bear to be separated from the son whose name he had hardly permitted to be mentioned before him. The death of Montmenil, which happened 8th September, 1743, in consequence of a cold caught at a hunting party, was such a blow to his father, then far advanced in life, that it determined his total retirement from Paris, and from the world.

The youngest son of our author also became a player, under the name of Pittenec; and it seems he was also a dramatic author, but made no distinguished figure in either capacity.

On the other hand Le Sage's second son showed a more staid character than either of his brothers, became a student of theology, and took orders. By the patronage of the queen (wife of Louis XV.) he became a canon of the Cathedral of Boulogne, and had the benefit of a pension. The moderate independence which he enjoyed enabled him, after his father had been entirely broken down in spirits by the death of Montmenil, to receive both him, his sister, and his mother under his roof, and to provide for them during the residue of their lives. The sister was eminent for her filial tenderness, and dedicated her life to the comfort of her parents.

It was after his retreat to Boulogne, and while residing under the roof of his son the canon, that we obtain an interesting account of Le Sage, then extremely aged, from the pen of the Comte de Tressan, to whom the ancient romances of France owe the same favour which has been rendered to those of England by the late ingenious and excellent George Ellis. The reader will feel interested in receiving the communication in the words of the count himself.

"PARIS, *20th January*, 1783.

"You have requested from me some account of the concluding period of the celebrated author of *Gil Blas*. Here follow the few anecdotes which I am able to furnish.

"In the end of the year 1745, after the battle of Fontenoy, the late king having named me to serve under the Maréchal de Richelieu, I received counter orders at Boulogne, and remained there, commandant of the Boulenois, Poitou, and Picardy.

"Having learned that Mons. Le Sage, aged upwards of eighty years, with his wife nearly as old, resided at Boulogne, I was early desirous of visiting them, and of acquainting myself with their

situation. I found that they lived in family with their son, a canon of the Cathedral of Boulogne; and never was filial piety more tenderly occupied than his, in cheering and supporting the latter days of parents, who had scarce any other resource than the moderate revenue of their son.

"The Abbé Le Sage enjoyed the highest respect at Boulogne. His talents, his virtues, his social affections, rendered him dear to Monseigneur de Pressy, his worthy bishop, to his fraternity, and to the public.

"I have seen few resemblances more striking than that of the Abbé Le Sage to his brother Mons. de Montmenil; he had even a portion of his talents, and of his most agreeable qualities. No one could read verses more agreeably. He possessed the uncommon art of that variation of tone, and of employing those brief pauses, which, without being actual declamation, impress on the hearers the sentiments and the beauties of the author.

"I had known, and I regretted, Mons. Montmenil. I entertained esteem and friendship for his brother; and the late queen, in consequence of the account which I had to lay before her of the Abbé Le Sage's situation, and his narrow fortune, procured him a pension upon a benefice.

"I had been apprised not to go to visit Mons. Le Sage till near the approach of noon; and the feelings of that old man made me observe, for a second time, the effect which the state of the atmosphere produces in the melancholy days of bodily decline.

"Mons. Le Sage awaking every morning so soon as the sun appeared some degrees above the horizon, became animated, acquired feeling and force, in proportion as that planet approached the meridian; but as the sun began to decline, the sensibility of the old man, the light of his intellect, and the activity of his bodily organs, began to diminish in proportion; and no sooner had the sun descended some degrees under the horizon, than he sunk into a lethargy, from which it was difficult to rouse him.

"I took care only to make my visit at that period of the day when his intellect was most clear, which was the hour after he had dined. I could not view without emotion the respectable old man, who preserved the gaiety and urbanity of his better years, and sometimes even displayed the imagination of the author of the *Diable Boiteux* and of *Turcaret*. But one day, having come more late than usual, I was sorry to see that his conversation began to resemble the last homilies of the Bishop of Grenada, and I instantly withdrew.

"Mons. Le Sage had become very deaf. I always found him

seated near a table on which lay a large hearing-trumpet; that trumpet, which he sometimes snatched up with vivacity, remained unmoved on the table, when the nature of the visit which he received did not encourage him to hope for agreeable conversation. As I commanded in the province, I had the pleasure to see him always make use of it in conversation with me; and it was a lesson which prepared me to sustain the petulant activity of the hearing-trumpet of my dear and illustrious associate and friend Mons. de La Condamine.[1]

" Monsieur Le Sage died in winter 1746-7. I considered it as an honour and duty to attend his funeral, with the principal officers under my command. His widow survived him but a short time; and a few years afterwards, the loss of the Abbé Le Sage became the subject of regret to his Chapter, and the enlightened society to which he was endeared by his virtues."

The interesting account of Monsieur de Tressan having conducted Le Sage to an honoured tomb, we have but to add that an epitaph, placed over his grave, expressed, in indifferent poetry, the honourable truth, that he was the friend of Virtue rather than of Fortune.[2] Indeed when the giddy hours of youth were passed, his conduct seems to have been irreproachable; and if, in his works, he has assailed vice rather with ridicule than with reproach, and has, at the same time, conducted his story through scenes of pleasure and of licence, his Muse has moved with an unpolluted step, even where the path was somewhat miry. In short, it is highly to the honour of Le Sage that—differing in that particular from many of his countrymen who have moved in the same walk of letters — he has never condescended to pander to vice by warmth or indelicacy of description. If Voltaire, as it is said, held the powers of Le Sage in low estimation, such slight regard was particularly misplaced towards one, who, without awakening one evil thought, was able, by his agreeable fictions, to excite more lasting and more honourable interest than the witty Lord of Ferney himself, even though Asmodeus sat at his elbow to aid him in composing *Candie* and *Zadig*.

[1] Mons. de la Condamine, very deaf and very importunate, was the terror of the members of the Academie, from the vivacity with which he urged enquiries, which could only be satisfied by the inconvenient medium of his hearing-trumpet.

[2] " Sous ce tombeau Le Sage abattu,
Par le ciseau de la Parque importune.
S'il ne fut pas ami de la Fortune,
Il fut toujours ami de la Vertu."

CHARLES JOHNSTONE

Of the author of the *Adventures of a Guinea,* a satire which, from its resemblance to the *Diable Boiteux,* arranges naturally with those of the author of *Gil Blas,* we can say but little.

Charles Johnstone was an Irishman by birth, though it is said a Scotsman by descent, and of the Annandale family. If so, we have adopted the proper orthography, though his name seems to have sometimes been spelt Johnson. He received a classical education; and, being called to the Bar, came to England to practise. Johnstone, like Le Sage—and the coincidence is a singular one—was subject to the infirmity of deafness, an inconvenience which naturally interfered with his professional success; although, by a rare union of high talents with eloquence and profound professional skill, joined to an almost intuitive acuteness of apprehension, we have, in our time, seen the disadvantage splendidly surmounted. But Johnstone possessed considerable abilities, of which he has left at least one admirable example, in the *Adventures of a Guinea.* His talents were of a lively and companionable sort, and as he was much abroad in the world, he had already, in his youth, kept such general society with men of all descriptions as enabled him to trace their vices and follies with a pencil so powerful.

Chrysal is said to have been composed at the late Lord Mount Edgecomb's, in Devonshire, during a visit to his lordship. About 1760, the work was announced in the newspapers as "a dispassionate distinct account of the most remarkable transactions of the present times all over Europe." The publication immediately followed, and, possessing at once the allurement of setting forth the personal and secret history of living characters, and that of strong expression and powerful painting, the public attention was instantly directed towards it. A second edition was called for almost immediately, to which the author made several additions, which are incorporated with the original text. But the public avidity being still unsatisfied, the third edition, in 1761, was augmented to four volumes.[1] The author, justly

[1] ["Dr. Johnson told me" (1773), says Boswell, "he did not know who was the author of the *Adventures of a Guinea;* but that the bookseller had sent the first volume to him in manuscript, to have his opinion if it should be printed; and he thought it should."—Croker's *Boswell,* vol. ii., p. 500.]

thinking that it was unnecessary to bestow much pains in dovetailing his additional matter upon the original narrative, and conscious that no one was interested in the regular transmission of Chrysal from one hand to another, has only connected the Original Work and the Continuation by references, which will not be found always either accurate or intelligible—a point upon which he seems to have been indifferent.

After this successful effort, Mr. Johnstone published the following obscure and forgotten works:

The Reverie; or, a Flight to the Paradise of Fools. 2 vols. 12mo, 1762. A satire.

The History of Arsaces, Prince of Betlis. 2 vols. 12mo, 1774. A sort of political romance.

The Pilgrim; or, A Picture of Life. 2 vols. 12mo, 1775.

The History of John Juniper, Esq. alias *Juniper Jack.* 3 vols. 12mo, 1781. A romance in low life.

These publications we perused long since, but remember nothing of them so accurately as to induce us to hazard an opinion on their merits.

So late as 1782, twenty years after the appearance of *Chrysal*, Mr. Johnstone went to seek fortune in India, and had the happy chance to find it there, though not without encountering calamity on the road. The *Brilliant*, Captain Mears, in which he embarked, was wrecked off the Joanna Islands, and many lives lost. Johnstone, with the captain and some others, was saved with difficulty.

In Bengal, Johnstone wrote much for the periodical papers, under the signature of Oneiropolos. He became joint-proprietor of one of the Bengal newspapers, acquired considerable property, and died about the year 1800; and, as is conjectured, in the seventieth year of his age. Most of these facts have been transferred from Mr. Chalmers's *Biographical Dictionary*.

It is only as the author of what has been termed the Scandalous Chronicle of the time that Johnstone's literary character attracts our notice. We have already observed that there is a close resemblance betwixt the plan of *Chrysal* and that of the *Diable Boiteux*. In both works, a spirit, possessed of the power of reading the thoughts and explaining the motives of mankind, is supposed to communicate to a mortal a real view of humanity, stripping men's actions of their borrowed pretexts and simulated motives, and tracing their source directly to their passions or their follies. But the French author is more fortunate than the English in the medium of communication he has chosen, or

rather borrowed, from Guevara. Asmodeus is himself a personage admirably imagined and uniformly sustained, and who entertains the reader as completely by the display of his own character, as by that of any which he anatomises for the instruction of Don Cleofas. Malicious as he is, the reader conceives even a kind of liking for the Fiend, and is somewhat disconcerted with the idea of his returning to his cabalistic bottle; nay, could we judge of the infernal regions by this single specimen, we might be apt to conceive, with Sancho Panza, that there is some good company to be found even in hell. Chrysal, on the other hand, is a mere elementary spirit, without feeling, passion, or peculiar character, and who only reflects back, like a mirror, the objects which have been presented to him, without adding to or modifying them by any contribution of his own.

The tracing of a piece of coin into the hands of various possessors, and giving an account of the actions and character of each, is an ingenious medium for moral satire, which, however, had been already employed by Dr. Bathurst, the friend of Johnson, in the *Adventures of a Halfpenny*, which form the forty-third Number of the *Adventurer*, published 3rd April, 1753, several years before *Chrysal*.

It is chiefly in the tone of the satire that the adventures of Chrysal differ from those of Le Sage's heroes. We have compared the latter author to Horace, and may now safely rate Charles Johnstone as a prose Juvenal. The Frenchman describes follies which excite our laughter—the Briton drags into light vices and crimes which arouse our horror and detestation. And, as we before observed that the scenes of Le Sage might, in a moral point of view, be improved by an infusion of more vigour and dignity of feeling, so Johnstone might have rendered his satire more poignant, without being less severe, by throwing more lights among his shades, and sparing us the grossness of some of the scenes which he reprobates. As Le Sage renders vice ludicrous, Johnstone seems to paint even folly as detestable, as well as ridiculous. His Herald and Auctioneer are among his lightest characters; but their determined roguery and greediness render them hateful even while they are comic.

It must be allowed to this caustic satirist that the time in which he lived called for such an unsparing and uncompromising censor. A long course of national peace and prosperity had brought with these blessings their usual attendant evils—selfishness, avarice, and gross debauchery. We are not now, perhaps, more moral in our conduct than men were fifty or sixty years

since; but modern vice pays a tax to appearances, and is contented to wear a mask of decorum. A Lady H—— and the Pollard Ashe, so often mentioned in Horace Walpole's *Correspondence*, would not certainly dare to insult decency in the public manner then tolerated; nor would our wildest debauchees venture to imitate the orgies of Medenham Abbey, painted by Johnstone in such horrible colours. Neither is this the bound of our improvement. Our public men are now under the necessity of being actuated, or at least appearing to be so, by nobler motives than their predecessors proposed to themselves. Sir Robert Walpole, who, after having governed so many years by the most open and avowed corruption, amassed for himself a more than princely fortune out of the spoils of the state, would not now be tolerated. This age would not endure the splendours of Houghton. Our late ministers and statesmen have died, almost without an exception, beggared and bankrupt; a sure sign that, if they followed the dictates of ambition, they were at least free from those of avarice: and it is plain that the path of the former may often lie parallel with that prescribed by public virtue, while the latter must always seduce its votary into the by-way of private selfishness. The general corruption of the ministers themselves, and their undisguised fortunes, acquired by an avowed system of perquisites, carried, in our fathers' times, a corresponding spirit of greed and rapacity into every department, while, at the same time, it blinded the eyes of those who should have prevented spoliation. If those in subordinate offices paid enormous fees to their superiors, it could only be in order to purchase the privilege for themselves of cheating the public with impunity. And in the same manner, if commissaries for the army and navy filled the purses of the commanders, they did so only that they might thereby obtain full licence to exercise every sort of pillage at the expense of the miserable privates. We were well acquainted with men of credit and character, who served in the Havannah expedition; and we have always heard them affirm that the infamous and horrid scenes described in *Chrysal* were not in the slightest degree exaggerated. That attention to the wants, that watchful guardianship of the rights and interests, of the private soldier and sailor, which in our days do honour to these services, were then totally unknown. The commanders in each department had in their eye the amassing of wealth, instead of the gathering of laurels, as the minister was determined to enrich himself with indifference to the welfare of his country; and the elder Pitt,

as well as Wolfe, were considered as characters almost above humanity, not so much for the eloquence and high talents of the one, or the military skill of the other, as because they made the honour and interest of their country their direct and principal object. They *dared*, to use the classical phrase, to contemn wealth—the statesman and soldier of the present day would, on the contrary, not *dare* to propose it to himself as an object.

The comparative improvement of our manners, as well as of our government, is owing certainly, in a great measure, to more general diffusion of knowledge and improvement of taste. But it was fostered by the private virtues and patriotism of the late venerated Monarch. The check which his youthful frown already put upon vice and licence is noticed in *Chrysal* more than once; and the disgrace of more than one minister, in the earlier part of his reign, was traced pretty distinctly to their having augmented their private fortunes, by availing themselves of their political information to speculate in the funds. The abuses in public offices have, in like manner, been restrained, the system of perquisites abolished, and all means of indirect advantage interdicted, as far as possible, to the servants of the public. In the army and navy the same salutary regulations have been adopted; and the Commander-in-Chief has proved himself the best friend to his family and country, in cutting up by the roots those infectious cankers, which gnawed our military strength, and which are so deservedly stigmatised in the caustic pages of *Chrysal*.

In Johnstone's time this reform had not commenced, and he might well have said, with such an ardent temper as he seems to have possessed, *Difficile est satyram non scribere*. He has accordingly indulged his bent to the utmost; and as most of his characters were living persons, then easily recognised, he held the mirror to nature, even when it reflects such horrible features. His language is firm and energetic—his power of personifying character striking and forcible, and the persons of his narrative move, breathe, and speak, in all the freshness of life. His sentiments are, in general, those of the bold, high-minded, and indignant censor of a loose and corrupted age; yet it cannot be denied that Johnstone, in his hatred and contempt for the more degenerate vices, of ingratitude, avarice, and baseness of every kind, shows but too much disposition to favour Churchill and other libertines, who thought fit to practise open looseness of manners, because they said it was better than hypocrisy. It is true, such vices may subsist along with very noble and

generous qualities; but as all profligacy has its root in self-gratification and indulgence, it is always odds that the weeds rise so fast as to choke the slower and nobler crop.

The same indulgence to the usual freedoms of a town life seems to have influenced Johnstone's dislike to the Methodists, of whose founder, Whitefield, he has drawn a most odious and a most unjust portrait. It is not the province of the Editor of a book of professed amusement to vindicate the tenets of a sect which holds almost all amusement to be criminal; but it is necessary to do justice to every one. The peculiar tenets of the Methodists are, in many respects, narrow and illiberal—they are also enthusiastical, and, acting on minds of a certain temperament, have produced the fatal extremities of spiritual presumption, or spiritual despair. But to judge as we would desire to be judged, we must try their doctrine, not by those points in which they differ, but by those in which they agree with all other Christians; and if we find that the Methodists recommend purity of life, strictness of morals, and a regular discharge of the duties of society, are they to be branded as hypocrites because they abstain from its amusements and its gaieties? Were the number of the Methodists to be multiplied by a hundred there would remain enough behind to fill the theatres and encourage the fine arts.

Respecting the remarkable person by whom the sect was founded, posterity has done him justice for the calumnies with which he was persecuted during his life, and which he bore with the enduring fortitude of a confessor. The poverty in which Whitefield died proved his purity of heart, and refuted the charge so grossly urged, of his taking a selfish interest in the charitable subscriptions which his eloquence promoted so effectually. His enthusiasm—for Providence uses, in accomplishing great ends, the imperfections as well as the talents of his creatures—served to awaken, to a consciousness of their deplorable state, thousands, to whose apathy and ignorance a colder preacher might have spoken in vain; and perhaps even the Church of England herself has been less impaired by the schism, than benefited by the effects of emulation upon her learned clergy. In a word, if Cowper's portrait of Whitefield has some traits of flattery, it still approaches far more near to the original than the caricature of Johnstone:—

> "He loved the world that hated him—the tear
> That dropped upon the Bible was sincere.
> Assailed by scandal and the tongue of strife,

His only answer was a blameless life;
And he that forged, and he that threw the dart,
Had each a brother's interest in his heart.
Paul's love of Christ, and steadiness unbribed,
Were followed well in him, and well transcribed."

We think these remarks necessary to justice in the preface to a work in which this memorable individual is so deeply charged. They can hardly be imputed to any other motive, since those likely to be gratified by this vindication cannot very consistently seek for it in this place. But readers of a different description may do well to remember that the cant of imputing to hypocrisy all pretensions to a severer scale of morals, or a more vivid sense of religion, is as offensive to sound reason and Christian philosophy, as that which attaches a charge of guilt to matters of indifference, or to the ordinary amusements of life.

We would willingly hope that several of Johnstone's other characters, if less grossly calumniated than Whitefield, are at least considerably over-charged. The first Lord Holland was a thoroughbred statesman of that evil period, and the Earl of Sandwich an open libertine; yet they also had their lighter shades of character, although *Chrysal* holds them up to the unmitigated horror of posterity. The same may be said of others; and this exaggeration was the more easy, as Johnstone does not pretend that the crimes imputed to those personages were all literally committed, but admits that he invented such incidents as he judged might best correspond to the idea which he had formed of their character; thus rather shaping his facts according to a preconceived opinion than deducing his opinion from facts which had actually taken place.

The truth is that, young, ardent, and bold, the author seems to have caught fire from his own subject, to have united credulity in belief with force of description, and to have pushed praise too readily into panegyric, while he exaggerated censure into reprobation. He everywhere shows himself strongly influenced by the current tone of popular feeling; nay, unless in the case of Wilkes, whose simulated patriotism he seems to have suspected, his acuteness of discrimination seldom enables him to correct public opinion. The Bill for the Naturalisation of the Jews had just occasioned a general clamour, and we see Chrysal not only exposing their commercial character in the most odious colours, but reviving the ancient and absurd fable of their celebrating the Feast of the Passover by the immolation of Christian infants. With the same prejudiced credulity he swallows, with-

out hesitation, all the wild and inconsistent charges which were then heaped upon the order of the Jesuits, and which occasioned the general clamour for their suppression.

On the other hand, because it was the fashion to represent the continental war, which had for its sole object the protection of the Electorate of Hanover, as waged in defence of the Protestant religion, Johnstone has dressed up the selfish and atheistical Frederick of Prussia in the character of *the Protestant hero*, and put into his mouth a prayer adapted to the character of a self-devoted Christian soldier, who drew his sword in the defence of that religion which was enshrined in his own bosom. This is so totally out of all keeping and character that one can scarce help thinking that the author has written, not his own sentiments, but such as were most likely to catch the public mind at the time.

But, feeling and writing under the popular impression of the moment, Johnstone has never failed to feel and write like a true Briton, with a sincere admiration of his country's laws, an ardent desire for her prosperity, and a sympathy with her interests, which more than atone for every error and prejudice. He testifies on many occasions his respect for the House of Brunswick, and leaves his testimony against the proceedings first commenced by Wilkes, and so closely followed by imitators of that unprincipled demagogue, for the purpose of courting the populace by slandering the throne. It is remarkable that, notwithstanding his zeal for King George and the Protestant religion, the Jacobite party, though their expiring intrigues might have furnished some piquant anecdotes, are scarcely mentioned in *Chrysal*.

A Key to the personages introduced to the reader in *Chrysal* was furnished by the author himself to Lord Mount Edgecomb, and another to Captain Mears, with whom he sailed to India. It is published by Mr. William Davis, in his collection of *Bibliographical and Literary Anecdotes*, with this caveat—"The author's intention was to draw general characters; therefore, in the application of the Key, the reader must exercise his own judgment."[1] The Key is subjoined to the text, with a few additional notes, illustrative of such incidents and characters as properly belong to history or to public life. Anecdotes of private scandal are willingly left in the mystery in which the text has involved them; and some instances occur, in which the obvious misrepresentations of the satirist have been modified by explanation. But when all exaggeration has been deducted

[1] [See Davis's *Olio*, pp. 13, 21.]

from this singular work, enough of truth will still remain in *Chrysal* to incline the reader to congratulate himself, that these scenes have passed more than half a century before his time.

ROBERT BAGE

Robert Bage, a writer of no ordinary merit in the department of fictitious composition, was one of that class of men occurring in Britain alone, who unite successfully the cultivation of letters with those mechanical pursuits which, upon the continent, are considered as incompatible with the character of an author. The professors of letters are, in most nations, apt to form a *caste* of their own, into which they may admit men educated for the learned professions, on condition, generally speaking, that they surrender their pretensions to the lucrative practice of them; but from which mere burghers, occupied in ordinary commerce, are as severely excluded as *roturiers* were of old from the society of the *noblesse*. The case of a papermaker or a printer employing their own art upon their own publications would be thought uncommon in France or Germany; yet such were the stations of Bage and Richardson.

The Editor has been obliged by Miss Catherine Hutton, daughter of Mr. Hutton of Birmingham, well known as an ingenious and successful antiquary,[1] with a memoir of the few incidents marking the life of Robert Bage, whom a kindred genius, as well as a close commercial intercourse, combined to unite in the bonds of strict friendship. The communication is extremely interesting, and the extracts from Bage's letters show that, amidst the bitterness of political prejudices, the embarrassment of commercial affairs, and all the teasing technicalities of business, the author of *Barham Downs* still maintained the good-humoured gaiety of his natural temper. One would almost think the author must have drawn from his own private letter-book and correspondence the discriminating touches which mark the men of business in his novels.

[1] [William Hutton, F.S.A. Edin., bookseller, Birmingham, a native of Derby, who raised himself by industry, from a very small beginning, to a state of affluence and respectability, died 1815, aged 92. He employed his pen on a variety of subjects, antiquarian, statistical, poetical, and historical.]

The father of Robert Bage was a papermaker at Darley, a hamlet on the river Derwent, adjoining the town of Derby, and was remarkable only for having had four wives. Robert was the son of the first, and was born at Darley on the 29th of February, 1728. His mother died soon after his birth; and his father, though he retained his mill, and continued to follow his occupation, removed to Derby, where his son received his education at a common school. His attainments here, however, were very remarkable, and such as excited the surprise and admiration of all who knew him. At seven years old, he had made a proficiency in Latin. To a knowledge of the Latin language succeeded a knowledge of the art of making paper, which he acquired under the tuition of his father.

At the age of twenty-three, Robert Bage married a young woman, who possessed beauty, good sense, good temper, and money. It may be presumed that the first of these was the first forgotten; the two following secured his happiness in domestic life; the last aided him in the manufacture of paper, which he commenced at Elford, four miles from Tamworth, and conducted to the end of his days.

Though no man was more attentive to business, and no one in the country made paper so good of its kind, yet the direction of a manufactory, combined with his present literary attainments, did not satisfy the comprehensive mind of Robert Bage. His manufactory, under his eye, went on with the regularity of a machine, and left him leisure to indulge his desire of knowledge. He acquired the French language from books alone, without any instructor; and his familiarity with it is evinced by his frequent, perhaps too frequent, use of it in the *Fair Syrian*. Nine years after his marriage, he studied mathematics; and, as he makes one of his characters say, and as he probably thought respecting himself, "He was obliged to this science for a correct imagination, and a taste for uniformity in the common actions of life."

In the year 1765, Bage entered into partnership with three persons (one of them the celebrated Dr. Darwin) in an extensive manufactory of iron; and, at the end of fourteen years, when the partnership terminated, he found himself a loser, it is believed, of fifteen hundred pounds. The reason and philosophy of the paper-maker might have struggled long against so considerable a loss; the man of letters committed his cause to a better champion—literary occupation—the tried solace of misfortune, want, and imprisonment. He wrote the novel of *Mount*

Henneth, in two volumes, which was sold to Lowndes for thirty pounds, and published in 1781. The strong mind, playful fancy, liberal sentiments, and extensive knowledge of the author, are everywhere apparent; but, as he says himself, "too great praise is a bad letter of recommendation;" and truth, which he worshipped, demands the acknowledgment that its sins against decorum are manifest.

The succeeding works of Bage were, *Barham Downs*, two volumes, published 1784; *The Fair Syrian*, two volumes, published (about) 1787; *James Wallace*, three volumes, published 1788; *Man as he is*, four volumes, published 1792; *Hermsprong, or Man as he is not*, three volumes, published 1796. It is, perhaps, without a parallel in the annals of literature, that, of six different works, comprising a period of fifteen years, the last should be, as it unquestionably is, the best. Several of Bage's novels were translated into German and published at Frankfort.

Whoever has read Hayley's *Life of Cowper* will not be sorry that an author should speak for himself instead of his biographer speaking for him; on this principle are given some extracts from the letters of Robert Bage to his friend, William Hutton. Hutton purchased nearly all the paper which Bage made during forty-five years; and, though Bage's letters were letters of business, they were written in a manner peculiarly his own, and friendship was, more or less, interwoven in them; for trade did not, in him, extinguish, or contract, one finer feeling of the soul. Bage, in his ostensible character of a paper-maker, says:—

"*March* 28, 1785.

"I swear to thee I am one of the most cautious men in the world with regard to the excise; I constantly interpret against myself in doubtful points; and, if I knew a place where I was vulnerable, I would arm it with the armour of Achilles. I have already armed myself all over with the armour of righteousness, but that signifies nothing with our people of excise."

"*August* 15, 1787.

"Oh how I wish thou wouldst bend all thy powers to write a history of excise—with cases—showing the injustice, the inequality of clauses in acts, and the eternal direction every new one takes towards the oppression of the subject: It might be the most useful book extant. Of whites and blues, blue demy only can come into thy magazine, and that at a great risk of contention with the Lords of the Exchequer; for I know not whether I have understood the sense of the people who have seldom the good luck to understand themselves. The paper sent is charged at the lowest price at which a sober paper-maker can live, and drink small-beer."

" *December* 10, 1788.

" Authors, especially when they have acquired a certain degree of reputation, should be candid, and addicted to speak good as well as evil, of poor dumb things. The rope paper is too thin, I own; but why abuse it from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot? If I have eyes, it has many good qualities, and I hope the good people of Birmingham may find them out. But it is too thin —I am heartily and sincerely concerned for it: But, as I cannot make it thicker, all I can do is to reduce the price. Thou proposest threepence a-ream—I agree to it. If thou really believest sixpence ought to be abated, do it. Combine together the qualities of justice and mercy, and to their united influence I leave thee."

" *February* 23, 1789.

" The certainty that it cannot be afforded at the stipulated price, makes me run my rope paper too thin. Of this fault, however, I must mend, and will mend, whether thou can'st, or can'st not mend my price. I had rather lose some profit than sink a tolerable name into a bad one."

" *March* 11, 1793.

" I make no bill-of-parcels. I do not see why I should give myself the trouble to make thee bills-of-parcels, as thou can'st make them thyself; and, more especially, when it is probable thou wilt make them more to my liking than the issues of my own pen. If the paper is below the standard so far as to oblige thee to lower the price, I am willing to assist in bearing the loss. If the quantity over-burthens thee, take off a shilling a-bundle—or take off two; for thy disposition towards me—I see it with pleasure—is kindly."

" *June* 30, 1795.

" Everything looks black and malignant upon me. Men clamouring for wages which I cannot give—women threatening to pull down my mill—rags raised by freight and insurance—excise-officers depriving me of paper! Say, if thou can'st, whether these gentlemen of the excise-office can seize paper after it has left the maker's possession?—after it has been marked?—stamped?—signed with the officer's name?—excise duty paid?—Do they these things?—Am I to hang myself? "

" *June* 6, 1799.

" Thou can'st not think how teasing the excise-officers are about colour. They had nearly seized a quantity of common cap paper, because it was whitened by the frost. They have an antipathy to anything whiter than sackcloth."

Bage actually had paper seized by the excise-officers, and the same paper liberated, seized again, and again liberated. If his wisdom and integrity have been manifested in the foregoing

extracts, the ignorance and folly of these men, or of their masters, must be obvious.

A few extracts, not so immediately connected with conduct in trade, may not be superfluous.

"I swear by Juno, dear William, that one man cannot be more desirous of dealing with another than I am with thee. The chain that connects us cannot be snapped asunder without giving me pain almost to torture. Thou art not so sure of having found the place where Henry the Seventh was lost, as thou mightst have been of finding Elford and a friend.

"I received thy pamphlet,[1] and am not sure whether I have not read it with more pleasure than any of thy former works. It is lively, and the reasoning just. Only remember, it is sometimes against the institutions of juries and county courts that thou hast directed thy satire, which, I think, ought to be confined to the abuses of them. But why abusest thou me? Did'st thou not know of *Mount Henneth*, and *Barham Downs*, before publication? Yea, thou did'st. I think thou did'st also of the *Fair Syrian*. Of what, then, dost thou accuse me? Be just. And why dost thou call me an infidel? Do I not believe in everything thou savest? And am I not impatient for thy Derby? I am such a scoundrel as to grumble at paying 30 per cent. *ad valorem*, which I really do, and more, on my boards, as if one could do too much for one's king and country. But I shall be rewarded when thy *History of Derby* comes forth."

"Miss Hutton was the harbinger of peace and good-will from the reviewers. I knew she had taste and judgment; I knew also that her encomium would go beyond the just and proper bounds; but I also believed she would not condescend to flatter without some foundation."

"Eat my breakfast quietly, thou varlet! So I do when my house does not smoke, or my wife scold, or the newspapers do not tickle me into an irritation, or my men clamour for another increase of wages. But I must get my bread by eating as little of it as possible; for my Lord Pitt will want all I can screw of overplus. No matter. Ten years [2] hence, perhaps, I shall not care a farthing."

"Another meeting among my men! Another (the third) raising of wages! What will all this end in? William Pitt seems playing off another of his alarming manœuvres—Invasion—against the meeting of Parliament, to scare us into a quiet parting with our money."

"If thou hast been again into Wales, and hast not expired in ecstasy, I hope to hear from thee soon. In the interim, and always and evermore, I am thine."

[1] *Dissertation on Juries.*

[2] Bage lived eight months after the date of this letter, which was written January 24, 1801.

"I am afraid thy straggling mode of sending me any body's bills, and everybody's bills, will subject me often to returned ones. But I have received good at thy hands, and shall I not receive evil? Everything in this finest, freest, best of all possible countries, grows worse and worse, and why not thou?

"I looked for the anger thou talked'st of in thy last, but could not find it; and for what wouldst thou have been angry, if thou couldst? Turn thy wrath from me, and direct it against the winds and the fogs. In future, I fear it will be directed against the collectors of dirty rags in London and in Germany, where the prices 'have increased, are increasing, and ought to be diminished'—but will not be so, because we begin the century by not doing what we ought to do. What we shall do at the end of it I neither know nor care."

In October, 1800, Bage had visited Hutton at Birmingham, where the latter still passed the hours of business, and had taken Bennett's Hill in his way home, to call on Catherine Hutton, the daughter of his friend. Both were alarmed at the alteration in Bage's countenance, which exhibited evident symptoms of declining health. They believed that they should see him no more; and he was probably impressed with the same idea, for, on quitting the house at Birmingham, he cordially shook hands with Samuel Hutton, the grand-nephew of his friend, and said, "Farewell, my dear lad, we shall meet again in heaven."

At home, Bage seems to have indulged the hope of another meeting in the present world; for two months after his letter of January, he says, in a letter to Hutton, "Tell Miss Hutton that I have thought of her some hundred times since I saw her; insomuch that I feared I was falling in love. I do love her as much as a man seventy-three years of age, and married, ought to love. I like the idea of paying her a visit, and will try to make it reality some time—but not yet." In April he was scarcely able to write a letter. In June he was again capable of attending to business; but in reply to his friend, who had mentioned paying him a visit, he said, "I should have been glad and sorry, dear William, to have seen thee at Tamworth." On the 1st of September, 1801, he died.

Bage had quitted Elford, and during the last eight years of his life he resided at Tamworth, where he ended his days. His wife survived him, but is since dead. He had three sons, one of whom died as he was approaching manhood, to the severe affliction of his father. Charles, the eldest son, settled at Shrewsbury, where he was the proprietor of a very extensive cotton manufactory. He died in 1822, at the age of seventy. Edward, the younger son, was apprenticed to a surgeon and

apothecary at Tamworth, where he afterwards followed his profession. He died many years before his brother. Both possessed a large portion of their father's talents, and equalled him in integrity and moral conduct.

In his person, Robert Bage was somewhat under the middle size, and rather slender, but well proportioned. His complexion was fair and ruddy; his hair light and curling; his countenance intelligent, mild, and placid. His manners were courteous, and his mind was firm. His integrity, his honour, his devotion to truth, were undeviating and incorruptible; his humanity, benevolence, and generosity, were not less conspicuous in private life, than they were in the principal characters in his works. He supplied persons he never saw with money, because he heard they were in want. He kept his servants and his horses to old age, and both men and quadrupeds were attached to him. He behaved to his sons with the unremitting affection of a father; but as they grew up, he treated them as men and equals, and allowed them that independence of mind and conduct which he claimed for himself.

On the subject of servants, Bage says, in *The Fair Syrian*, "I pity those unhappy masters, who, with unrelenting gravity, damp the effusions of a friendly heart, lest something too familiar for their lordly pride should issue from a servant's lip." Of a parent, he says, in the same work, "Instead of the iron rod of parents, he used only the authority of mild persuasion, and cultivated the affections of his children by social intercourse, and unremitting tenderness." It matters not into what mouth Robert Bage put these sentiments; they were his own, his practice was conformable to them, and their good effects were visible on all around him.

The following comparison between Robert Bage and his friend William Hutton was written by Charles Bage, son of the former, in a letter to Catherine Hutton, daughter of the latter, October 6, 1816.

"The contrast between your father's life and mine is curious. Both were distinguished by great natural talents; both were mild, benevolent, and affectionate, qualities which were impressed on their countenances; both were indignant at the wantonness of pride and power; both were industrious, and both had a strong attachment to literature: yet, with these resemblances, their success in life was very different; my father never had a strong passion for wealth, and he never rose into opulence. Your father's talents were continually excited by contact with 'the busy haunts of men;' my father's were repressed by a long residence in an unfrequented

place, in which he shunned the little society he might have had, because he could not relish the conversation of those whose minds were less cultivated than his own. In time, such was the effect of habit, that, although when young he was lively and fond of company, he enjoyed nothing but his book and pen, and a pool at quadrille with ladies. He seems, almost always, to have been fonder of the company of ladies than of men."

After this satisfactory account of Bage's life and character, there remains nothing for the Editor but to offer a few critical remarks upon his compositions.

The general object of Robert Bage's compositions is rather to exhibit character than to compose a narrative; rather to extend and infuse his own political and philosophical opinions, in which a man of his character was no doubt sincere, than merely to amuse the reader with the wonders, or melt him with the sorrows of a fictitious tale. In this respect he resembled Voltaire and Diderot, who made their most formidable assaults on the system of religion and politics which they assailed by embodying their objections in popular narratives. Even the quaint, facetious, ironical style of this author seems to be copied from the lesser political romances of the French school; and if Bage falls short of his prototypes in wit, he must be allowed to exhibit, upon several occasions, a rich and truly English vein of humour, which even Voltaire does not possess.

Respecting the tendency and motive of these works, it is not the Editor's purpose to say much. Bage appears, from his peculiar style, to have been educated a Quaker; at least—for we may be wrong in the above inference—he has always painted the individuals of that primitive sect of Christians in amiable colours, when they are introduced as personages into his novels. If this was the case, however, he appears to have wandered from the tenets of the Friends into the wastes of scepticism; and a sectary, who had reasoned himself into an infidel, could be friend neither to the Church of England nor the doctrines which she teaches. His opinions of state affairs were perhaps a little biassed by the frequent visits of the excisemen, who levied taxes on his commodities, for the purpose of maintaining a war which he disapproved of. It was most natural that a person who considered tax-gatherers as extortioners, and the soldiers, paid by the taxes, as licensed murderers, should conceive the whole existing state of human affairs to be wrong; and if he was conscious of talent, and the power of composition, he might, at the same time, naturally fancy that he was called upon to

put it to rights. No opinion was so prevalent in France, and none passed more current among the admirers of French philosophy in Britain, as that the power of framing governments, and of administering them, ought to remain with persons of literary attainments; or, in other words, that those who can most easily and readily write books, are therefore best qualified to govern states. Whoever peruses the writings of the late ingenious Madame de Staël will perceive that she (one of the most remarkable women certainly of her time) lived and died in the belief that revolutions were to be effected, and countries governed, by a proper succession of clever pamphlets. A nation which has long enjoyed the benefit of a free press does not furnish so many believers in the omnipotence of literary talent. Men are aware that every case may be argued on both sides, and seldom render their assent to any proposition merely on account of the skill with which it is advocated or the art and humour with which it is illustrated. The Editor of this work was never one of those who think that a good cause can suffer much by free discussion; and though differing entirely both from his political and theological tenets, admitted Mr. Bage's novels into the collection which he superintended, as works of talent and genius.

The satirical novel is a species of composition more adapted to confirm those who hold similar opinions with the author, by affording them a triumph at the expense of their opponents, than to convince those who, their minds being yet undecided, may be disposed calmly to investigate the subject. They who are inclined to burn an obnoxious or unpopular person in effigy care little how far his dress and external appearance are exaggerated: and, in the same way, it requires little address in an author to draw broad caricatures of those whom he regards as foes, or to make specious and flattering representations of such as he considers as friends. They who look on the world with an impartial eye will scarcely be of opinion that Mr. Bage has seized the true features which distinguish either the upper or lower ranks. The highest and the lowest rank in society are each indeed liable to temptations peculiarly their own, and their relative situation serves to illustrate the wisdom of the prayer, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." But these peculiar propensities, we think, will in life be found considerably different from the attributes ascribed to the higher and lower classes by Mr. Bage. In most cases, the author's great man resembles the giant of the ancient romance of chivalry, whose

evil qualities were presumed from his superior stature, and who was to be tilted at and cut to pieces, merely because he stood a few inches higher than his fellow-mortals. But the very vices and foibles of the higher classes in modern times are of a kind different from what Bage has frequently represented them. Men of rank, in the present day, are too indifferent, and too indolent, to indulge any of the stormy passions, and irregular but vehement desires, which create the petty tyrant, and perhaps formerly animated the feudal oppressor. Their general fault is a want of energy, or, to speak more accurately, an apathy, which is scarcely disturbed even by the feverish risks to which they expose their fortune, for the sole purpose, so far as can be discerned, of enjoying some momentary excitation. Amongst the numbers, both of rank and talent, who lie stranded upon the shores of Spenser's Lake of Idleness, are many who only want sufficient motives for exertion, to attract at once esteem and admiration; and among those, whom we rather despise than pity, a selfish apathy is the predominating attribute.

In like manner, the habits of the lower classes, as existing in Britain, are far from affording, exclusively, that rich fruit of virtue and generosity which Mr. Bage's writings would teach us to expect. On the contrary, they are discontented, not unnaturally, with the hardships of their situation, occupied too often in seizing upon the transient enjoyments which chance throws in their way, and open to temptations which promise to mend their condition in life, or at least to extend the circle of their pleasures at the expense of their morals.

Those, therefore, who weigh equally, will be disposed to think that the state of society most favourable to virtue, may be most successfully sought amongst those who neither want nor abound, who are neither sufficiently raised above the necessity of labour and industry to be satiated by the ready gratification of every wild wish as it arises, nor so much depressed below the general scale of society as to be exasperated by struggles against indigence, or seduced by the violence of temptations which that indigence renders it difficult to resist.

Though we have thus endeavoured to draw a broad line of distinction between the vices proper to the conditions of the rich and the poor, the reader must be cautious to understand these words in a relative sense. For men are not rich or poor in relation to the general amount of their means, but in proportion to their wants and their wishes. He who can adjust his expenses within the limits of his income, how small soever that

may be, must escape from the temptations which most easily beset indigence; and the rich man, who makes it his business, as it is his duty, to attend to the proper distribution of his wealth, will be equally emancipated from those to which opulence is peculiarly obnoxious.[1]

This misrepresentation of the different classes in society is not the only speculative error in which Bage has indulged during these poetic narratives. There is in his novels a dangerous tendency to slacken the reins of discipline upon a point, where, perhaps, of all others, society must be benefited by their curbing restraint.

Fielding, Smollett, and other novelists, have, with very indifferent taste, brought forward their heroes as rakes and debauchees, and treated with great lightness those breaches of morals which are too commonly considered as venial in the male sex; but Bage has extended, in some instances, that licence to the female sex, and seems at times even to sport with the ties of marriage, which is at once the institution of civil society most favourable to religion and good order, and that which, in its consequences, forms the most marked distinction between man and the lower animals. All the influence which women enjoy in society—their right to the exercise of that maternal care which forms the first and most indelible species of education; the wholesome and mitigating restraint which they possess over the passions of mankind; their power of protecting us when young, and cheering us when old—depend so entirely upon their personal purity, and the charm which it casts around them, that to insinuate a doubt of its real value, is wilfully to remove the broadest corner-stone on which civil society rests, with all its

[1] [" Our author, as we have already seen, betrays the dictates of his better reason in the midst of his apology for Tom Jones; but what importance he really attaches to the influence so undervalued in the passage we have quoted (see *ante*, p. 65, and note, p. 66), is distinctly proved and abundantly illustrated in his preface to the works of a very inferior novelist, Robert Bage. The writer whose works have thus been recalled from an oblivion which we cannot help thinking they merited, wrote at the period of the French Revolution; and though he had been born and bred among the primitive and virtuous sect of our Quakers, he systematically made his novels the vehicle of all the anti-social, anti-moral, and anti-religious theories that were then but too much in vogue among the half-educated classes in this country. Sir Walter, after exposing with just ridicule the style of gross and senseless caricature in which Mr. Bage, the son of a miller, and himself a paper-maker in a little country town, has thought fit to paint the manners of English gentlemen and ladies, proceeds, as follows, to notice the far graver offences of which his pen had been guilty: ' This misrepresentation of the different classes in society, etc.' "—*Quarterly Review*, Sept. 1826.]

benefits, and with all its comforts. It is true, we can easily conceive that a female like Miss Ross, in *Barham Downs*, may fall under the arts of a seducer, under circumstances so peculiar as to excite great compassion; nor are we so rigid as to say that such a person may not be restored to society, when her subsequent conduct shall have effaced recollection of her error. But she must return thither as a humble penitent, and has no title to sue out her pardon as a matter of right, and assume a place among the virtuous of her sex as if she had never fallen from her proper sphere. Her disgrace must not be considered as a trivial stain, which may be communicated by a husband as an exceeding good jest to his friend and correspondent; there must be, not penitence and reformation alone, but humiliation and abasement, in the recollection of her errors. This the laws of society demand even from the unfortunate; and to compromise farther would open a door to the most unbounded licentiousness. With this fault in principle is connected an indelicacy of expression frequently occurring in Bage's novels, but which, though a gross error in point of taste, we consider as a matter of much less consequence than the former. It is in some degree chastened in the present edition, and where it exists must find such shelter as it can under the faulty example of earlier novelists.

Having adverted to this prominent error in Mr. Bage's theory of morals, we are compelled to remark that his ideas respecting the male sex are not less inaccurate, considered as rules of mental government, than the over-indulgence with which he seems to regard female frailty. Hermsprong, whom he produces as the ideal perfection of humanity, is paraded as a man who, freed from all the nurse and all the priest has taught, steps forward on his path without any religious or political restraint, as one who derives his own rules of conduct from his own breast, and avoids or resists all temptations of evil passions, because his reason teaches him that they are attended with evil consequences. In the expressive words of our moral poet, Wordsworth, he is

> "A reasoning self-sufficient thing,
> An intellectual all-in-all."

But did such a man ever exist? or are we, in the fair construction of humanity, with all its temptations, its passions, and its frailties, entitled to expect such perfection from the mere force of practical philosophy? Let each reader ask his own bosom, whether it were possible for him to hold an unaltered tenor of

moral and virtuous conduct, did he suppose that to himself alone he was responsible, and that his own reason, a judge so peculiarly subject to be bribed, blinded, and imposed upon by the sophistry with which the human mind can gloss over those actions to which human passions so strongly impel us, was the ultimate judge of his actions? Let each reader ask the question at his own conscience, and if he can honestly and conscientiously answer in the affirmative, he is either that faultless monster which the world never saw, or he deceives himself as grossly as the poor devotee, who, referring his course of conduct to the action of some supposed internal inspiration, conceives himself, upon a different ground, incapable of crime, even when he is in the very act of committing it.

We are not treating this subject theologically; the nature of our present work excludes such serious reasoning. But we would remind, even in these slight sketches, those who stand up for the self-sufficient morality of modern philosophy, or rather sophistry, that the experiment has long since been tried on a large scale. Whatever may be the inferiority of the ancients in physical science, it will scarce be denied that in moral science they possess all the lights which the unassisted Reason, now referred to as the sufficient light of our paths, could possibly attain. Yet, when we survey what their system of Ethics did for the perfection of the human species, we shall see that but a very few even of the teachers themselves have left behind them such characters as tend to do honour to their doctrines. Some philosophers there were, who, as instructors in morality, showed a laudable example to their followers; and we will not invidiously enquire how far these were supported in their self-denial, either by vanity, or the desire of preserving consistency, or the importance annexed to the founder of a sect; although the least of these motives afford great support to temperance, even in cases where it is not rendered easy by advanced age, which of itself calms the more stormy passions. But the satires of Juvenal, of Petronius, and, above all, Lucian, show what slight effect the doctrines of Zeno, Epictetus, Plato, Socrates, and Epicurus, produced on their avowed followers; and how little influence the beard of the Stoic, the sophistry of the Academician, and the self-denied mortification of the Cynics, had upon the sects which derived their names from these distinguished philosophers. We shall find that these pretended despisers of sensual pleasures shared the worst vices of the grossest age of society, and added to them the detestable hypocrisy of pretending that they were

all the while guided by the laws of true wisdom and of right reason.

If, in modern times, they who own the restraint of philosophical discipline alone have not given way to such grossness of conduct, it is because those principles of religion, which they affect to despise, have impressed on the public mind a system of moral feeling unknown till the general prevalence of the Christian faith; but which, since its predominance, has so generally pervaded European society, that no pretender to innovation can directly disavow its influence, though he endeavours to show that the same results which are recommended from the Christian pulpit, and practised by the Christian community, might be reached by the unassisted efforts of that human reason, to which he counsels us to resign the sole regulation of our morals.

In short, to oppose one authority in the same department to another, the reader is requested to compare the character of the philosophic Square in *Tom Jones*, with that of Bage's philosophical heroes; and to consider seriously whether a system of ethics, founding an exclusive and paramount court in a man's own bosom for the regulation of his own conduct, is likely to form a noble, enlightened, and generous character, influencing others by superior energy and faultless example; or whether it is not more likely, as in the observer of the rule of right, to regulate morals according to temptation and to convenience, and to form a selfish, sophistical hypocrite, who, with morality always in his mouth, finds a perpetual apology for evading the practice of abstinence, when either passion or interest solicit him to indulgence.

We do not mean to say, that, because Bage entertained erroneous notions, he therefore acted viciously. The history of his life, so far as known to us, indicates a contrary course of conduct. It would seem, from his language, as we have already said, that he had been bred among the strict and benevolent sect of Friends; and if their doctrines carried him some length in speculative error, he certainly could derive nothing from them to favour laxity of morals. In his fictitious works, the Quakers are always brought forward in an amiable point of view; and the characters of Arnold, and particularly of Miss Carlile, are admirable pictures of the union of talent, and even wit, with the peculiar manners and sentiments of these interesting and primitive persons. But if not vicious himself, Bage's leading principles are such as, if acted upon, would introduce

vice into society; in men of a fiercer mould, they would lead to a very different line of conduct from his own; and, such being the case, it was the Editor's duty to point out the sophistry on which they are founded.

The works of Bage, abstracted from the views against which we have endeavoured to caution the reader, are of high and decided merit. It is scarce possible to read him without being amused, and, to a certain degree, instructed. His whole efforts are turned to the development of human character; and, it must be owned, he possessed a ready key to it. The mere story of the novels seldom possesses much interest—it is the conduct of his personages, as thinking and speaking beings, in which we are interested; and, contrary to the general case, the reader is seldom or never tempted to pass over the dialogue in order to continue the narrative. The author deals occasionally in quick and improbable conversions, as in that of Sir George Osmond, from selfishness and avarice, to generosity and liberality, by the mere loveliness of virtue in his brother and his friends. And he does not appear to have possessed much knowledge of that species of character which is formed by profession or by nationality. His seamen are indifferent; his Irishmen not beyond those usually brought on the stage; his Scotchmen still more awkward caricatures, and the language which he puts in their mouths not similar to any that has been spoken since the days of Babel. It is in detecting the internal workings of a powerful understanding, like that of Paracelsus Holman, that Bage's power chiefly consists; and great that power must be, considering how much more difficult it is to trace those varieties of character which are formed by such working, than merely to point out such as the mind receives from the manners and customs of the country in which it has ripened.

A light, gay, pleasing air, carries us agreeably through Bage's novels; and when we are disposed to be angry at seeing the worse made to appear the better reason, we are reconciled to the author by the ease and good-humour of his style. We did not think it proper to reject the works of so eminent an author from this collection merely on account of speculative errors. We have done our best to place a mark on these; and, as we are far from being of opinion that the youngest and most thoughtless derive their serious opinions from productions of this nature, we leave them for our reader's amusement, trusting that he will remember that a good jest is no argument; that a novelist, like the master of a puppet-show, has his drama under

his absolute authority, and shapes the events to favour his own opinions; and that whether the Devil flies away with Punch, or Punch strangles the Devil, forms no real argument as to the comparative power of either one or other, but only indicates the special pleasure of the master of the motion.

HENRY MACKENZIE

For the biographical part of the following Memoir we are chiefly indebted to a short sketch of the life of our distinguished contemporary, compiled from the most authentic sources, and prefixed to a beautiful duodecimo edition of *The Man of Feeling*, printed at Paris a few years since.[1] We have had the farther advantage of correcting and enlarging the statements which it contains, from undoubted authority.

Henry Mackenzie, Esq., was born at Edinburgh, in August 1745, on the same day on which Prince Charles Stuart landed in Scotland.[2] His father was Dr. Joshua Mackenzie, of that city; and his mother, Margaret, the eldest daughter of Mr. Rose of Kilravock, of a very ancient family in Nairnshire. After being educated at the High School and University of Edinburgh, Mr. Mackenzie, by the advice of some friends of his father, was articled to Mr. Inglis of Redhall, in order to acquire a knowledge of the business of the Exchequer, a law-department, in which he was likely to have fewer competitors than in any other in Scotland.

To this profession, although not perfectly compatible with that literary taste which he very early displayed, Mr. Mackenzie applied with due diligence; and, in 1765, went to London, to study the modes of English Exchequer practice, which, as well as the constitution of the court, are similar in both countries. While there, his talents induced a friend to solicit his remaining in London, and qualifying himself for the English bar. But the anxious wishes of his family that he should reside with them, and the moderation of an unambitious mind, decided his return

[1] [The original source of the memoir alluded to, is the publication entitled "*The British Gallery of Contemporary Portraits*. London, 1808," etc.]

[2] ["Prince Charles Stuart landed in Scotland on the 25th of July, 1745; but he raised his standard on the 19th of August."]

to Edinburgh: and here he became, first, partner, and afterwards successor, to Mr. Inglis, in the office of the Attorney for the Crown.

His professional labour, however, did not prevent his attachment to literary pursuits. When in London, he sketched some part of his first, and very popular work, *The Man of Feeling*, which was published in 1771, without his name; and was so much a favourite with the public as to become, a few years after, the occasion of a remarkable literary fraud. A young clergyman, Mr. Eccles, of Bath, observing that this work was unaccompanied by an author's name, laid claim to it, transcribed the whole in his own hand, with blottings, interlineations, and corrections; and maintained his assumed right with such plausible pertinacity, that Messrs. Cadell and Strachan (Mr. Mackenzie's publishers) found it necessary to undeceive the public by a formal contradiction. This impostor was afterwards drowned while bathing in the river Avon.[1]

In a few years after this, Mr. Mackenzie published his *Man of the World* [1773], which seems to be intended as a second part to *The Man of Feeling*. It breathes the same tone of exquisite moral delicacy, and of refined sensibility. In his former fiction, he imagined a hero constantly obedient to every emotion of his moral sense; in *The Man of the World*, he exhibited, on the contrary, a person rushing headlong into guilt and ruin, and spreading misery all around him, by pursuing a selfish and sensual happiness which he expected to obtain in defiance of the moral sense. His next production was *Julia de Roubigné* [1777], a novel in a series of letters. The fable is deeply interesting, and the letters are written with great elegance and propriety of style.

In 1776, Mr. Mackenzie was married to Miss Penuel Grant, daughter of Sir Ludovick Grant of Grant, Bart., and Lady Margaret Ogilvy, by whom he has a numerous family; the eldest of whom, Mr. Henry Joshua Mackenzie, has been called to the situation of a Judge of the Supreme Court of Session, with the unanimous approbation of his profession and his country.

In 1777, or 1778, a society of gentlemen,[2] of Edinburgh, were

[1] [The *Gentleman's Magazine* for September 1777, gives an epitaph on Mr. Eccles, which begins thus:

"Beneath this stone *The Man of Feeling* lies."]

[2] [This society comprised, besides Mr. Mackenzie, and Mr. (afterwards Lord) Craig, who also was a frequent contributor to the *Mirror* and *Lounger*—Mr. Cullen, afterwards Lord Cullen; Mr. Macleod Bannatyne, afterwards Lord Bannatyne, and created a Baronet on his retirement from the bench;

accustomed at their meetings to read short essays of their composition, in the manner of the *Spectator*, and Mr. Mackenzie being admitted a member, after hearing several of them read, suggested the advantage of giving greater variety to their compositions, by admitting some of a lighter kind, descriptive of common life and manners; and he exhibited some specimens of the kind in his own writing. From this arose the *Mirror*,[1] a well-known periodical publication to which Mr. Mackenzie performed the office of editor, and was also the principal contributor. The success of the *Mirror* naturally led Mr. Mackenzie and his friends to undertake the *Lounger*,[2] upon the same plan, which was not less read, admired, and generally circulated.

When the Royal Society of Edinburgh was instituted, Mr. Mackenzie became one of its most active members, and he has occasionally enriched the volumes of its *Transactions* by his valuable communications; particularly by an elegant tribute to the memory of his friend, Judge Abercromby, and a memoir on German Tragedy. He is one of the original members of the Highland Society; and by him have been published the volumes of their *Transactions*, to which he has prefixed an account of the Institution and principal proceedings of the Society, and an interesting account of Gaelic poetry.

In the year 1792, he was one of those literary men who contributed some little occasional tracts to disabuse the lower orders of the people, led astray at that time by the prevailing frenzy of the French Revolution. In 1793, he wrote the *Life of Dr. Blacklock*, at the request of his widow, prefixed to a quarto edition of that blind poet's works. His intimacy with Blacklock gave him an opportunity of knowing the habits of his life, the bent of his mind, and the feelings peculiar to the privation of sight, under which that amiable and interesting poet laboured.

The literary society of Edinburgh, in the latter part of last century, whose intimacy he enjoyed, is described in his *Life of John Home*, which he read to the Royal Society in 1812, and, as a sort of supplement to that life, he then added some critical essays, chiefly on dramatic poetry, which have not been published. He has since contributed to the society a curious Essay on Dreaming, which was heard with much interest.

George Hume, afterwards Lord Wedderburn; and some others, all, except Mr. Mackenzie, connected with the bar. To the periodical papers of this club, articles were likewise contributed by Lord Hailes, Henry the Historian, Professor Richardson of Glasgow, and Mr. David Hume, afterwards Baron of the Exchequer.]

[1] Begun the 23rd January, 1779; ended 27th May, 1780.

[2] Begun 6th February, 1785; ended 6th January, 1787.

In 1808, Mr. Mackenzie published a complete edition of his works, in eight volumes octavo; including a tragedy, *The Spanish Father*, and a comedy, *The White Hypocrite*, which last was once performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. The tragedy had never been represented, in consequence of Mr. Garrick's opinion that the catastrophe was of too shocking a kind for the modern stage; though he owned the merit of the poetry, the force of some of the scenes, and the scope for fine action in the character of Alphonso, the leading person of the drama. In this edition also is given a carefully corrected copy of the tragedy of *The Prince of Tunis*, which had been represented at Edinburgh, in 1763, with great success.[1]

Among the prose compositions of Mr. Mackenzie is a political tract, *An Account of the Proceedings of the Parliament of* 1784, which he was induced to write at the persuasion of his old and steady friend, Mr. Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville. It introduced him to the countenance and regard of Mr. Pitt, who revised the work with particular care and attention, and made several corrections in it with his own hand. Some years after Mr. Mackenzie was appointed, on the recommendation of Lord Melville and the Right Hon. George Rose, also his particular friend, to the office of Comptroller of the Taxes for Scotland, an appointment of very considerable labour and responsibility, and in discharging which this fanciful and ingenious author has shown his power of entering into and discussing the most dry and complicated details, when such labour became a matter of duty.

The time, we hope, is yet distant, when, speaking of this author as of those with whom his genius ranks him, a biographer may with delicacy trace his personal character and peculiarities, or record the manner in which he has discharged the duties of a citizen. When that hour shall arrive, we trust few of his own contemporaries will be left to mourn him; but we can anticipate the sorrow of a later generation, when deprived of the wit which enlivened their hours of enjoyment, the benevolence which directed and encouraged their studies, and the wisdom which instructed them in their duties to society. It is enough to say here, that Mr. Mackenzie survives, venerable and venerated, as the last link of the chain which connects the Scottish literature

[1] [Mr. Mackenzie's *Account of the Life and Writings of Home* was published in a separate volume, and at the same time prefixed to an edition—*The Works of John Home, Esq.*, now first collected, etc. 3 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh: Constable and Co. 1822.]

of the present age with the period when there were giants in the land—the days of Robertson, and Hume, and Smith, and Home, and Clerk, and Fergusson; and that the remembrance of an era so interesting could not have been intrusted to a sounder judgment, a more correct taste, or a more tenacious memory. It is much to be wished, that Mr. Mackenzie, taking a wider view of his earlier years than in the *Life of Home*, would place on a more permanent record some of the anecdotes and recollections with which he delights society.[1] We are about to measure his capacity for the task by a singular standard, but it belongs to Mr. Mackenzie's character. He has, we believe, shot game of every description which Scotland contains (deer and probably grouse excepted), on the very grounds at present occupied by the extensive and splendid streets of the New Town of Edinburgh; has sought for hares and wild-ducks, where there are now palaces, churches, and assembly-rooms; and has witnessed moral revolutions as surprising as this extraordinary change of local circumstances. These mutations in manners and in morals have been gradual indeed in their progress, but most important in their results, and they have been introduced into Scotland within the last half century. Every sketch of them, or of the circumstances by which they were produced, from the pen of so intelligent an observer, and whose opportunities of observation have been so extensive, would, however slight and detached, rival in utility and amusement any work of the present time.

As an author, Mr. Mackenzie has shown talents both for poetry and the drama. Indeed we are of opinion that no man can succeed perfectly in the line of fictitious composition, without most of the properties of a poet, though he may be no writer of verses; but Mr. Mackenzie possesses the powers of melody in addition to those of poetical conception. He has given a beautiful specimen of legendary poetry, in two little Highland ballads, a style of composition which becomes fashionable from time to time, on account of its simplicity and pathos, and then is again

[1] [See an interesting account of this work, with much of additional information regarding Scottish characters, and manners of the period to which it relates, from the pen of Sir Walter Scott, in the *Quarterly Review*, No. lxxi. June 1827, and which will be given in an after volume of the present series. Sir Walter says, "It is to this distinguished circle, or, at least, to the greater part of its members, that Mr. Mackenzie introduces his readers; and that they must indeed be void of curiosity who do not desire to know something more of such men, than can be found in their works, and especially when the communication is made by a contemporary so well entitled to ask, and so well qualified to command attention."]

laid aside, when worn out by the commonplace productions of mere imitators, to whom its approved facility offers its chief recommendation. But it is as a Novelist that we are now called on to consider our author's powers; and the universal and permanent popularity of his writings entitles us to rank him among the most distinguished of his class. His works possess the rare and invaluable property of originality, to which all other qualities are as dust in the balance; and the sources to which he resorts to excite our interest are rendered accessible by a path peculiarly his own. The reader's attention is not riveted, as in Fielding's works, by strongly marked character, and the lucid evolution of a well-constructed fable; or, as in Smollett's novels, by broad and strong humour, and a decisively superior knowledge of human life in all its varieties; nor, to mention authors whom Mackenzie more nearly resembles, does he attain the pathetic effect which is the object of all three, in the same manner as Richardson, or as Sterne. An accumulation of circumstances, sometimes amounting to tediousness, a combination of minutely traced events, with an ample commentary on each, were thought necessary by Richardson to excite and prepare the mind of the reader for the affecting scenes which he has occasionally touched with such force; and without denying him his due merit, it must be allowed that he has employed preparatory volumes in accomplishing what has cost Mackenzie and Sterne only a few pages, perhaps only a few sentences.

On the other hand, although the two last authors have, in particular passages, a more strong resemblance to each other than those formerly named, yet there remain such essential points of difference betwixt them, as must secure for Mackenzie the praise of originality, which we have claimed for him. It is needless to point out to the reader the difference between the general character of their writings, or how far the chaste, correct, almost studiously decorous manner and style of the works of the author of *The Man of Feeling* differ from the wild wit and intrepid contempt at once of decency and regularity of composition, which distinguish *Tristram Shandy*. It is not in the general conduct or style of their works that they in the slightest degree approach; nay, no two authors in the British language can be more distinct. But even in the particular passages where both had in view to excite the reader's pathetic sympathy, the modes resorted to are different. The pathos of Sterne in some degree resembles his humour, and is seldom attained by simple means; a wild, fanciful, beautiful

flight of thought and expression is remarkable in the former, as an extravagant, burlesque, and ludicrous strain of conception and language characterises the latter. The celebrated passage, where the tear of the recording Angel blots the profane oath of Uncle Toby out of the register of heaven, a flight so poetically fanciful as to be stretched to the very verge of extravagance, will illustrate our position. To attain his object—that is, to make us thoroughly sympathise with the excited state of mind which betrays Uncle Toby into the indecorous assertion which forms the ground-work of the whole—the author calls Heaven and Hell into the lists, and represents, in a fine poetic frenzy, its effects on the accusing spirit and registering angel. Let this be contrasted with the fine tale of *La Roche*, in which Mackenzie has described, with such unexampled delicacy and powerful effect, the sublime scene of the sorrows and resignation of the bereaved father. This is also painted reflectively; that is, the reader's sympathy is excited by the effect produced on one of the drama, neither angel nor devil, but a philosopher, whose heart remains sensitive, though his studies have misled his mind into the frozen regions of scepticism. To say nothing of the tendency of the two passages, which will scarce, in the mind of the most unthinking, bear any comparison, we would only remark that Mackenzie has given us a moral truth, Sterne a beautiful trope; and that if the one claims the palm of superior brilliancy of imagination, that due to nature and accuracy of human feeling must abide with the Scottish author.

Yet while marking this broad and distinct difference between these two authors, the most celebrated certainly among those who are termed sentimental, it is but fair to Sterne to add, that although Mackenzie has rejected his licence of wit, and flights of imagination, retrenched, in a great measure, his episodical digressions, and altogether banished the indecency and buffoonery to which he had too frequent recourse, still their volumes must be accounted as belonging to the same class; and amongst the thousand imitators who have pursued their path, we cannot recollect one English author who is entitled to the same honour. The foreign authors, Riccoboni and Marivaux, belong to the same department; but of the former we remember little; and the latter, though full of the most delicate touches, often depends for effect on the turn of phrase, and the protracted embarrassments of artificial gallantry, more than upon the truth and simplicity of nature. The *Heloise* and *Emile* partake of the insanity of their author, and are exaggerated, though most

eloquent, descriptions of overwhelming passion, rather than works of sentiment.

In future compositions, the author dropped even that resemblance which the style of *The Man of Feeling* bears, in some particulars, to the works of Sterne; and his country may boast that, in one instance at least, she has produced, in Mackenzie, a writer of pure musical Addisonian prose, which retains the quality of vigour, without forfeiting that of clearness and simplicity.

We are hence led to observe, that the principal object of Mackenzie, in all his novels, has been to reach and sustain a tone of moral pathos, by representing the effect of incidents, whether important or trifling, upon the human mind, and especially on those which were not only just, honourable, and intelligent, but so framed as to be responsive to those finer feelings to which ordinary hearts are callous. This is the direct and professed object of Mackenzie's first work, which is in fact no narrative, but a series of successive incidents, each rendered interesting by the mode in which they operate on the feelings of Harley. The attempt had been perilous in a meaner hand; for, sketched by a pencil less nicely discriminating, Harley, instead of a being whom we love, respect, sympathise with, and admire, had become the mere Quixote of sentiment, an object of pity perhaps, but of ridicule at the same time. Against this the author has guarded with great skill; and while duped and swindled in London, Harley neither loses our consideration as a man of sense and spirit, nor is subjected to that degree of contempt with which readers in general regard the misadventures of a novice upon town, whilst they hug themselves in their own superior knowledge of the world. Harley's spirited conduct towards an impertinent passenger in the stage-coach, and his start of animated indignation on listening to Edward's story, are skilfully thrown in, to satisfy the reader that his softness and gentleness of temper were not allied to effeminacy; and that he dared, on suitable occasions, do all that might become a man. We have heard that some of Harley's feelings were taken from those of the author himself, when, at his first entrance on the dry and barbarous study of the municipal law, he was looking back, like Blackstone, on the land of the Muses, which he was condemned to leave behind him. It has also been said, that the fine sketch of Miss Walton was taken from the heiress of a family of distinction, who ranked at that time high in the Scottish fashionable world. But such surmises are little worth the tracing; for we

believe no original character was ever composed by any author, without the idea having been previously suggested by something which he had observed in nature.

The other novels of Mr. Mackenzie, although assuming a more regular and narrative form, are, like *The Man of Feeling*, rather the history of effects produced on the human mind by a series of events, than the narrative of those events themselves. The villany of Sindall is the tale of a heart hardened to selfishness by incessant and unlimited gratification of the external senses; a contrast to that of Harley, whose mental feelings have acquired such an ascendency as to render him unfit for the ordinary business of life. The picture of the former is so horrid, that we would be disposed to deny its truth, did we not unhappily know that sensual indulgence, in the words of Burns,

> " ——hardens a' within,
> And petrifies the feeling; "

and that there never did, and never will exist, anything permanently noble and excellent in character, which was a stranger to the exercise of resolute self-denial. The account of the victims of Sindall's arts and crimes, particularly the early history of the Annesleys, is exquisitely well drawn; and, perhaps, the scene between the brother and sister by the pond equals any part of the author's writings. Should the reader doubt this, he may easily make the experiment, by putting it into the hands of any young person of feeling and intelligence, and of an age so early as not to have forgotten the sports and passions of childhood.

The beautiful and tragic tale of *Julia de Roubigné*, is of a very different tenor from *The Man of the World;* and we have good authority for thinking that it was written in some degree as a counterpart to the latter work. A friend of the author, the celebrated Lord Kames, we believe, had represented to Mr. Mackenzie, in how many poems, plays, and novels, the distress of the piece is made to turn upon the designing villany of some one of the *dramatis personæ*. On considering his observations, the author undertook, as a task fit for his genius, the composition of a story, in which the characters should be all naturally virtuous, and where the calamities of the catastrophe should arise, as frequently happens in actual life, not out of schemes of premeditated villany, but from the excess and over-indulgence of passions and feelings, in themselves blameless, nay, praiseworthy, but which, encouraged to a morbid excess, and coming

into fatal though fortuitous concourse with each other, lead to the most disastrous consequences. Mr. Mackenzie executed his purpose; and as the plan fell in most happily with the views of a writer, whose object was less to describe external objects, than to read a lesson on the human passions, he has produced one of the most heart-wringing histories that has ever been written. The very circumstances which palliate the errors of the sufferers, in whose distress we interest ourselves, point out to the reader that there is neither room for hope, remedy, nor revenge. When a Lovelace or a Sindall comes forth like an Evil Principle, the agent of all the misery of the scene, we see a chance of their artifices being detected, at least the victims have the consciousness of innocence, the reader the stern hope of vengeance. But when, as in *Julia de Roubigné,* the revival of mutual affection on the part of two pure and amiable beings, imprudently and incautiously indulged, awakens, and not unjustly, the jealous honour of a high-spirited husband—when we see Julia precipitated into misery by her preference of filial duty to early love—Savillon, by his faithful and tender attachment to a deserving object—and Montauban, by a jealous regard to his spotless fame—we are made aware, at the same time, that there is no hope of aught but the most unhappy catastrophe. The side of each sufferer is pierced by the very staff on which he leant, and the natural and virtuous feelings which they at first most legitimately indulged, precipitate them into error, crimes, remorse, and misery. The cruelty to which Montauban is hurried, may, perhaps, be supposed to exempt him from our sympathy, especially in an age when such crimes as that of which Julia is suspected are usually borne by the injured parties with more equanimity than her husband displays. But the irritable habits of the time, and of his Spanish descent, must plead the apology of Montauban, as they are admitted to form that of Othello. Perhaps, on the whole, *Julia de Roubigné* gives the reader too much actual pain to be so generally popular as *The Man of Feeling,* since we have found its superiority to that beautiful essay on human sensibility often disputed by those whose taste we are in general inclined to defer to. The very acute feelings which the work usually excites among the readers whose sympathies are liable to be awakened by scenes of fictitious distress, we are disposed to ascribe to the extreme accuracy and truth of the sentiments, as well as the beautiful manner in which they are expressed. There are few who have not at one period of life broken ties of love and friendship, secret disappointments

of the heart, to mourn over; and we know no book which recalls the recollection of such more severely than *Julia de Roubigné*.

We return to consider the key-note, as we may term it, on which Mackenzie has formed his tales of fictitious woe, and which we have repeatedly described to be the illustration of the nicer and finer sensibilities of the human breast. To attain this point, and to place it in the strongest and most unbroken light, the author seems to have kept the other faculties with which we know him to be gifted in careful subordination. The Northern Addison, who revived the art of periodical writing, and sketched, though with a light pencil, the follies and the lesser vices of his time, has showed himself a master of playful satire. The historian of the Homespun family may place his narrative, without fear of shame, by the side of the *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Colonel Caustic and Umfraville are masterly conceptions of the *laudator temporis acti;* and many personages in those papers which Mr. Mackenzie contributed to the *Mirror* and *Lounger*, attest with what truth, spirit, and ease he could describe, assume, and sustain a variety of characters. The beautiful landscape-painting which he has exhibited in many passages (take, for example, that where the country-seat of the old Scottish lady and its accompaniments are so exquisitely delineated) assures us of the accuracy and delicacy of his touch in delineating the beauties of nature.

But all these powerful talents, any single one of which might have sufficed to bring men of more bounded powers into notice, have been by Mackenzie carefully subjected to the principal object which he proposed to himself—the delineation of the human heart. Variety of character he has introduced sparingly, and has seldom recourse to any peculiarity of incident, availing himself generally of those which may be considered as common property to all writers of romance. His sense of the beauties of nature, and power of describing them, are carefully *kept down*, to use the expression of the artists; and like the single straggling bough, which shades the face of his sleeping veteran, just introduced to relieve his principal object, but not to eclipse it. It cannot be termed an exception to this rule, though certainly a peculiarity of this author, that on all occasions where silvan sports can be introduced, he displays an intimate familiarity with them, and, from personal habits, to which we have elsewhere alluded, shows a delight to dwell for an instant upon a favourite topic.

Lastly, the wit which sparkles in his periodical essays, and in

his private conversation, shows itself but little in his novels; and although his peculiar vein of humour may be much more frequently traced, yet it is so softened down, and divested of the broad ludicrous, that it harmonises with the most grave and affecting parts of the tale, and becomes, like the satire of Jaques, only a more humorous shade of melancholy. In short, Mackenzie aimed at being the historian of feeling, and has succeeded in the object of his ambition. But as mankind are never contented, and as critics are certainly no exception to a rule so general, we could wish that, without losing or altering a line our author has written, he had condescended to give us, in addition to his stores of sentiment, a romance on life and manners, by which, we are convinced, he would have twisted another branch of laurel into his garland. However, as Sebastian expresses it,

> "What had been, is unknown; what is, appears."

We must be proudly satisfied with what we have received, and happy that, in this line of composition, we can boast a living author, of excellence like that of Henry Mackenzie.[1]

[1] [Venerable and venerated, as "the last link of the chain which connected the Scottish literature of the present age, with the period when there were giants in the land—the days of Robertson, and Hume, and Smith, and Home, and Clerk, and Fergusson"—Mr. Mackenzie long lived the ornament and pride of his native city. The moment at length arrived when his numerous and attached friends were to be deprived of "the wit which enhanced their hours of retirement, the benevolence which directed and encouraged their studies, and the wisdom which instructed them in their duties to society." After having been confined to his room for a considerable time by the general decay attending old age, Mr. Mackenzie expired on the evening of Friday, the 14th of January, 1831, in his eighty-sixth year.—*Annual Biography*, 1832.]

CHARLOTTE SMITH

This tribute of affection to one of our most distinguished novelists, is not from the pen of the author of the biographical sketches in the preceding volume. It was communicated to him in the most obliging manner by Mrs. Dorset, sister of the subject of the memoir, and not more nearly allied to her in blood than in genius.[1] The publication which it is intended to accompany, being discontinued, as mentioned in the preliminary advertisement, vol. iii., the following paper was never before in print. But, on collecting the biographical sketches in the present form, the author could not abandon the claim, so kindly permitted him, to add this to the number. He is himself responsible for the critical remarks which conclude the article.

"Mrs. Charlotte Smith was the eldest daughter of Nicholas Turner, Esq. of Stoke House, in Surrey, and of Bignor Park, in Sussex, by Anna Towers, his first wife. She was born in King Street, St. James's Square, on the 4th of May, 1749. Before she had accomplished her fourth year, she was deprived of a mother as distinguished by her superior understanding as for her uncommon beauty. The charge of her education devolved on her aunt, who, with unwearied zeal, devoted the best years of her life to the duty she had undertaken. Accomplishments seemed to have been the objects of her ambition, and no time was lost in their attainment; for her little charge was attended by an eminent dancing-master, when such a mere infant, that she was taught her first steps on a dining-table. She never recollected the time when she could not read, and was in the habit of reading every book that fell in her way, even before she went to school, which was at six years old, when she was placed in a respectable establishment at Chichester.

"Her father, desirous of cultivating her talent for drawing, engaged George Smith, a celebrated artist, and a native and inhabitant of that city, to instruct her in the rudiments of his art, and she was taken two or three times in a week to his house to receive lessons.

"From Chichester she was removed in her eighth year to a

[1] [Mrs. Dorset is well known as the authoress of the elegant *jeu d'esprit*, so often imitated by inferior pens, *The Peacock at Home*, etc.]

school at Kensington, at that time in high repute, and where the daughters of the most distinguished families received their education. Of her progress at this time I am tempted to give the following account from the pen of a lady who was her schoolfellow:—

'In answer to your enquiry whether Mrs. Smith was during our intimacy at school superior to other young persons of her age, my recollection enables me to tell you, that she excelled most of us in writing and drawing. She was reckoned by far the finest dancer, and was always brought forward for exhibition whenever company was assembled to see our performances; and she would have excelled all her competitors had her application borne any proportion to her talents; but she was always thought *too great a genius to study*. She had a great taste for music, and a correct ear, but never applied to it with sufficient steadiness to ensure success. But however she might be inferior to others in some points, she was far above them in intellect, and the general improvement of the mind. She had read more than any one in the school, and was continually composing verses; she was considered romantic; and though I was not of that turn myself, I neither loved nor admired her the less for it. In my opinion, her ideas were always original, full of wit and imagination, and her conversation singularly pleasing; and so I have continued to think, since a greater intercourse with society, and a more perfect knowledge of the world, has better qualified me to estimate her character.'

"In this seminary it was the custom for the pupils to perform both French and English plays, and on these occasions the talents of Miss Turner were always put in requisition, as she was considered by far the best actress of the little troop; and her theatrical talents were much applauded both at school and at home, where she was frequently called on to exhibit her powers to whatever company happened to be assembled at her father's. I do not think this early, and certainly injudicious display, produced the unfavourable effect on her manners which might have been expected. It induced no boldness or undue confidence, for she was rather of a retiring than of an assuming disposition; yet it probably had an unfavourable influence on her character, and contributed to foster that romantic turn of mind which distinguished her even in childhood. It was at this school she first began to compose verses—they were shown and praised among the friends of the family as proofs of early genius; but none of them have been preserved. I have an imperfect recollection that the subject of one of these early effusions was the death of General Wolfe, when she must have been in her tenth year—though she speaks in one of her works of earlier compositions.

"At twelve years of age she quitted school, and her father, then residing part of the year in London, engaged masters to attend her at home; but very little advantage could have been derived from their instructions, for she was at that early age introduced into society, frequented all public places with her family, and her appearance and manners were so much beyond her years, that at fourteen her father received proposals for her from a gentleman of suitable station and fortune, which were rejected on account of her extreme youth. Happy would it have been if reasons of such weight had continued in force a few years longer!

"With so many objects to engage her attention, and the late hours incident to a life of dissipation, her studies (if they could be so called) were not prosecuted with any degree of diligence or success. As if foreseeing how short would be the period of her youthful pleasures, she pursued them with the avidity natural to her lively character; and though her father was sometimes disposed to check her love of dissipation, he always suffered himself to be disarmed by a few sighs or tears. Her passion for books continued unabated, though her reading was indiscriminate, and chiefly confined to poetry and works of fiction. At this time she sent several of her compositions to the editors of the *Lady's Magazine*, unknown to her aunt.

"It is evident that Mrs. Smith's education, though very expensive, was superficial, and not calculated to give her any peculiar advantages. Her father's unbounded indulgence, and that of an aunt who almost idolised her, were ill calculated to prepare her mind to contend with the calamities of her future life; she often regretted that her attention had not been directed to more useful reading, and the study of languages. If she had any advantage over other young persons, it must have been in the society of her father, who was himself not only an elegant poet and a scholar, but a man of infinite wit and imagination, and it was scarce possible to live with him without catching some sparks of that brilliant fire which enlivened his conversation, and rendered him one of the most delightful companions of his time; yet when the short period is considered between the time of her leaving school and her marriage, and that his convivial talents made his company so generally courted, that he had little leisure to bestow on his family, she must rather have inherited than acquired the playful wit and peculiar vein of humour which distinguished her conversation.

"In 1764, Mr. Turner decided on a second marriage, and his

sister-in-law contemplated this event with the most painful apprehensions for the happiness of that being who was the object of her dearest affections, and who, having hitherto been indulged in every wish, and even every caprice, was ill prepared to submit to the control of a mother-in-law. Without reflecting that the evil she anticipated with such feelings of dread would probably exist only for a short period (for it was unlikely a young lady who was so generally admired would remain long single), she endeavoured, with a precipitation she had afterwards great reason to deplore, to establish her by an advantageous marriage, and her wishes were seconded by some officious and short-sighted relations, by whose means her introduction to Mr. Smith was contrived, after having properly prepared him, by their representations and excessive praises, to fall in love at first sight. The event justified their expectations—he did fall in love; care was taken to keep alive the flame by frequent parties of pleasure, and meetings at public places. He was just twenty-one, and she was not quite fifteen, when the acquaintance first took place, and it was no difficult task to talk her into an acquiescence with her aunt's views. Proposals were made, and accepted without much inquiry into the young man's disposition or character. He was the second son of Richard Smith, Esq., a West India merchant, and Director of the East India Company, who had realised a large fortune, and his younger son had been admitted a partner in his lucrative business. The choice of his son did not at first meet with his approbation—he would have been better pleased had he selected the daughter of some thrifty citizen, than that of a gay man of the world, whom he concluded (and justly enough) had not been brought up in those economical habits which he considered the most desirable qualifications in a wife; but the first interview with his future daughter-in-law overcame all his objections, and he ever after distinguished her with peculiar affection and partiality. This ill-assorted marriage took place on the 23rd of February, 1765;[1]

[1] [From this fatal marriage, which had been brought about by the officiousness of friends, and which was by no means the effect of attachment on either side, as both appeared to have been talked into it by the intermeddling of those short-sighted politicians, all the future misfortunes of the subject of these pages originated. An uncle of Mrs. Smith was the only person of the family who seemed to have had common sense on this occasion: he saw and foretold all the misery that would infallibly result from a union in which neither the habits nor the temper of the parties had been considered; when neither were arrived at a time of life to ascertain or appreciate the character of each other; but most unfortunately he had not sufficient weight to induce those, who saw this connection in a different view, to break off the negotiation.—*Monthly Magazine.*]

and after a residence of some months with Mr. Smith's sister, the widow of William Berney, Esq., Mrs. Smith found herself established in the house which had been prepared for her in one of the narrowest and most dirty lanes in the city. It was a large dull habitation, into which the cheering beams of the sun had never penetrated. It was impossible to enter it without experiencing a chilling sensation and depression of spirits, which induced a longing desire to escape from its gloom, which not all the taste and expense with which it had been fitted up could dispel.

"The habits to which its young mistress was expected to conform were little congenial to her feelings. The lower part of the house was appropriated to the business, and hither the elder Mr. Smith came every morning to superintend his commercial concerns, and usually took his chocolate in his daughter-in-law's dressing-room. He was a worthy, and even a good natured man, but he had mixed very little in general society—his ideas were confined, and his manners and habits were not calculated to inspire affection, however he might be entitled to respect and gratitude. He had no taste for literature, and the elegant amusements of his daughter-in-law appeared to him as so many sources of expense, and as encroachments on time, which he thought should be exclusively dedicated to domestic occupations; he had a quiet petulant way of speaking, and a pair of keen black eyes, which, darting from under his bushy black eyebrows the most inquisitive glances, always appeared to be in search of something to find fault with; so that whenever the creaking of his "youthful shoes well saved" gave notice that one of his domiciliary visits was about to take place, it was the signal for hurrying away whatever was likely to be the subject of his displeasure, or the object of his curiosity. If any of her friends or acquaintance happened to call on her, he would examine them with a suspicious curiosity, which usually compelled them to shorten their visits, and took from them the desire of repeating them. His lady, who was at that time in very ill health, exacted the constant attendance of the family, and a more irksome task could hardly have been imposed on a young person.

'I pass almost every day,' says Mrs. Smith, in a letter to one of her early friends, 'with the poor sick old lady, with whom, however, I am no great favourite; somebody has told her I have not been notably brought up (which I am afraid is true enough), and she asks me questions which, to say the truth, I am not very well able

to answer. There are no women, she says, so well qualified for mistresses of families as the ladies of Barbadoes, whose knowledge of housewifery she is perpetually contrasting with my ignorance, and, very unfortunately, those subjects on which I am informed, give me little credit with her; on the contrary, are rather a disadvantage to me; yet I have not seen any of their paragons whom I am at all disposed to envy.'

"The stately formality of this lady, her tall meagre figure, languid air, and sallow complexion, with the monotonous drawl and pronunciation peculiar to the natives of the West Indies, rendered her one of the most wearisome persons that can be imagined, and I fear her economical lectures had very little attraction for a girl who had never been required to pay much attention to household cares, and were listened to with apathy and disgust. This lady did not live long enough to effect the reformation she was so anxious for; her death, however, produced no great relief from this bondage. Mrs. Smith's attendance on her father-in-law was more than ever required, and a heavier duty never fell to the lot of youth and beauty. The poor old man was afflicted with a complication of disorders. From long residence in the West Indies he was so sensible of cold that he shrunk from the slightest breeze—no air was permitted to refresh his apartment, in which he sat in the hottest days of summer wrapped in his red roquelaure, surrounded with all the apparatus of sickness; she was expected to accompany him in his airings, on the dusty turnpike roads, with just enough of the carriage windows let down to admit the smell of brick kilns, or the stagnant green ditches in the environs of Islington.

"In the intervals of this recreation she had to assist at the lectures of an old governante, part of whose business it was to lull her master to sleep, by reading devotional books of the most gloomy tendency, with a broad Cumberland accent. Never did religion wear a garb so unalluring as in this house.

"The comfort of her own family was not improved by the accession of four or five wild, ungovernable, West Indian boys (sons of the correspondents of the house), who, during the Eton and Harrow vacations, were its inmates.

"Though she could occasionally give way to the sportiveness of her fancy, and describe these scenes of *ennui* and discomfort in the most humorous manner, yet the aversion she entertained for everything connected with this period of her life, and its contrast with her previous gay and cheerful habits, seems to have made the deepest impression, and to have reverted to her

mind latterly in the most forcible manner; and her feelings are beautifully depicted in her unfinished poem of *Beachy Head*. The lines are quoted by the elegant author of the *Censura Literaria*.[1]

" The following little poem, in which melancholy and humour are not unpleasingly blended, appears, from the feebleness of the handwriting, to have been composed a very short time before her death.

'TO MY LYRE

'Such as thou art, my faithful Lyre,
For all the great and wise admire,
Believe me, I would not exchange thee,
Since e'en adversity could never
Thee from my anguish'd bosom sever,
Or time or sorrow e'er estrange thee.

'Far from my native fields removed,
From all I valued, all I loved;
By early sorrows soon beset,
Annoy'd and wearied past endurance,
With drawbacks, bottomry, insurance,
With samples drawn, and tare and tret;

'With Scrip, and Omnium, and Consols,
With City Feasts and Lord Mayors' Balls,
Scenes that to me no joy afforded;
For all the anxious Sons of Care,
From Bishopsgate to Temple Bar,
To my young eyes seem'd gross and sordid.

'Proud city dames, with loud shrill clacks
(" The wealth of nations on their backs "),
Their clumsy daughters and their nieces,
Good sort of people! and well meaners,
But they could not be my congeners,
For I was of a different species.

'Long were thy gentle accents drown'd,
Till from Bow-bells' detested sound
I bore thee far, my darling treasure;
And unrepining left for thee
Both calepash and callipee,
And sought green fields, pure air, and leisure.

'Who that has heard thy silver tones—
Who that the Muse's influence owns,

[1] [See the first number of the *Censura Literaria*, in which Sir Egerton Brydges has given an elegant and eloquent criticism on Mrs. Charlotte Smith's works.]

Can at my fond attachment wonder,
That still my heart should own thy power?
Thou—who hast soothed each adverse hour,
So thou and I will never sunder.

'In cheerless solitude, bereft
Of youth and health, thou still art left,
When hope and fortune have deceived me;
Thou, far unlike the summer friend,
Did still my falt'ring steps attend,
And with thy plaintive voice relieved me.

'And as the time ere long must come
When I lie silent in the tomb,
Thou wilt preserve these mournful pages;
For gentle minds will love my verse,
And Pity shall my strains rehearse,
And tell my name to distant ages.'

"The death of her first child, which took place when she was confined with her second, had nearly proved fatal to her, from the excess of her affliction.[1] Change of air and scene were recommended, and a small house in the pleasant village of Southgate was engaged for her, and in a few months she regained her health. Hither she retired as much as was in her power, and here she enjoyed more liberty and tranquillity than had hitherto fallen to her lot. Her aunt had for some time ceased to reside with her, and was afterwards induced to become the wife of the elder Mr. Smith, which, of course, rendered her personal attendance on him unnecessary; and as her husband usually went to London every day, she became mistress of her own time, and was enabled to employ it in the cultivation of her mind. She possessed a considerable collection of books, and read indiscriminately, without having any friend to direct her studies or form her judgment.[2]

[1] ["The disorder that robbed her of this child was of a nature so malignant and infectious, that, of all her household, only herself and her new-born infant escaped it; and that infant, though he survived ten years, suffered so much in this early state of his existence, for want of the care which is then indispensably necessary, that his feeble and declining health embittered with the most cruel solicitude the life of his mother, who loved him with more than ordinary fondness."—*Public Characters*, vol. iii., p. 46.]

[2] ["Mrs. Smith, detesting more than ever the residence in the city, and being indeed unable to exist in it, had then a small house at some distance, where, as her husband was a good deal in town, and her sister not always with her, she lived very much alone, occupied solely by her family, now increased to three children. It was then her taste for reading revived, and she had a small library, which was her greatest resource. Her studies, however, did not interfere with the care of her children; she nursed them all herself, and usually read while she rocked the cradle of one, and had, perhaps, another sleeping on her lap."—*Public Characters*, vol. iii., p. 46.]

" The result of her mental improvement was not favourable to her happiness. She began to trace that indefinable restlessness and impatience, of which she had long been conscious without comprehending, to its source, to discriminate characters, to detect ignorance, to compare her own mind with those of the persons by whom she was surrounded.

" The consciousness of her own superiority, the mortifying conviction that she was subjected to one so infinitely her inferior, presented itself every day more forcibly to her mind, and she justly considered herself ' as a pearl that had been basely thrown away.'

" ' No disadvantage,' she observes in one of her letters, ' could equal those I sustained; the more my mind expanded, the more I became sensible of personal slavery; the more I improved and cultivated my understanding, the farther I was removed from those with whom I was condemned to pass my life; and the more clearly I saw by these newly-acquired lights the horror of the abyss into which I had unconsciously plunged.'

" Impressed with this fatal truth, nothing could be more meritorious than the line of conduct she pursued. Whatever were her opinions or her feelings, she confined them to her own bosom, and never to her most confidential friends suffered a complaint or a severe remark to escape her lips.

" During her residence at Southgate, her family had been considerably increased, and a larger house was become necessary; and it was hoped that by removing nearer to London, Mr. Smith would be induced to pay a stricter attendance on his business than he had hitherto done; and with this view his father purchased for him a handsome residence at Tottenham, where it was hoped he would retrieve his lost time. But his habits were fixed, he had no turn for business, and never could be prevailed on to bestow more than a small portion of that time on it, which nevertheless hung so heavy on his hands, that he was obliged to have recourse to a variety of expedients to get rid of it. Hence fancies became occupations, and were followed up with boundless expense, till they were relinquished for some newer fancy equally frivolous and equally costly.

" Mrs. Smith unfortunately disliked her situation at Tottenham, and the more so, from its having failed in the object proposed. She had little or no society, and her mind languished for want of congenial conversation, and her natural vivacity seemed extinguished by the monotony of her life.

" Her father-in-law was in the habit of confiding to her all his

anxieties, and frequently employed her pen in matters of business. On one occasion, she was called on to vindicate his character from some illiberal attack, and she acquitted herself of the task in a very able manner. This little tract was published, but not being of any general interest, has not been preserved. The elder Mr. Smith has frequently declared, that such was the readiness of her pen, that she could expedite more business in an hour from his dictation, than any one of his clerks could perform in a day: and he even offered her a considerable annual allowance, if she would reside in London and assist him in his business, which he foresaw would be lost to his family after his death. Obvious reasons prevented her acceptance of this proposal, which, singular as it was, affords a strong instance of the compass of her mind, which could adapt itself with equal facility to the charms of literature, and the dry details of commerce.

"Mrs. Smith had been long endeavouring to obtain her father-in-law's consent to the removal of her family entirely into the country; and such was her influence over him, that she prevailed, in opposition to his better judgment, and in 1774 an estate in Hants, called Lys Farm, was purchased, and in a new and untried situation she fondly imagined she should escape from existing evils; but she was soon awakened from her dream of happiness.[1]

"In removing her husband from his father's eye, she had taken off the only check which could restrain his conduct, and accordingly he plunged into expenses much more serious than any he had hitherto ventured upon. In other respects her situation was improved; and if she had not more actual happiness, she had occasional enjoyment; she had better and more frequent society: she was better appreciated, both on account of her talents and her personal attractions. Though she was at that time the mother of seven children, and had lost much of the lightness of her figure, she was in the meridian of her beauty—

[1] ["In consequence of so many cares, and a large establishment (for Mr. Smith launched into farming with more avidity than judgment, and purchased other parcels of land), her time was so much occupied, that but little leisure was left her for those pursuits she most delighted in. Surrounding circumstances, however, and ill-judged expenses, which she had no power to prevent, rendered her extremely unhappy; and when a few hours of the solitude she had learned to love were allowed her, her thoughts and feelings were expressed in some of those little poems, which she has since called sonnets: but so far were they from being intended for the public eye, that her most intimate friends never saw them till many years afterwards."—*Public Characters*, vol. iii., p. 47.]

> 'In the sober charms and dignity
> Of womanhood, mature, not verging yet
> Upon decay, in gesture like a queen:
> Such inborn and habitual majesty
> Ennobled all her steps.'

"It was natural that she should take pleasure in society, where she was sure to be well received, and that she should seek, in such dissipation as the neighbourhood afforded, a temporary relief from the unremitting vexations which embittered her domestic hours. In 1776 she lost her best friend in her husband's father, who, if not an agreeable person to live with, had many estimable qualities, and had the discernment to appreciate hers. From his death may be dated the long course of calamities which marked her subsequent life. Mr. Smith, whether from a conceit of his own knowledge of law, or from the mistaken economy of a narrow mind, that would risk thousands to save a few pounds, thought proper to make his own will. A most voluminous document! which, from its utter want of perspicuity, from its numerous incomprehensible and contradictory clauses, no two lawyers ever understood in the same sense. It was a tangled skein, which neither patience nor skill could unravel. He had appointed his widow, his son, and his son's wife, joint executors, intending to restrain his son's power, without excluding him; but the measure defeated itself. The widow, weak and infirm, was easily overruled by cajolery, or less gentle means; and the appointment of the wife was (as to immediate power) completely nugatory; so that the entire power over the property fell into the hands least fit to be intrusted with it. Endless disputes arose among the parties interested, or rather their agents, for many of Mr. Smith's grandchildren were orphans and minors; and, I believe, though Mrs. C. Smith considered herself and her children as the victims of these unhappy dissensions, the other branches of the family were more or less sufferers. Besides what was expended in law, and what was wasted by improvidence, the sum of £20,000 was lost to the family, by the old gentleman having suffered himself, with all his caution, to be overreached by his solicitor, who persuaded him to lend that sum to a distressed baronet on mortgage. But the security was bad; and I believe the family never received any compensation. Mrs. Smith had long foreseen the storm that was gathering round her, but had no power to avert it. A lucrative contract, which the interest of Mr. Robinson (then Secretary to the Treasury, and who had married

a sister of Mr. B. Smith's) procured for him, warded off the blow for a time, and he went on with his accustomed thoughtlessness. About this time he took an active part in a contested election for the county of Southampton, between Sir Richard Worsley and —— ——.[1] As the brother-in-law of Mr. Robinson, his exertions were, of course, in favour of the Ministerial candidate. Mrs. Smith had not at that time caught the contagion which spread so widely a few years afterwards, and very willingly lent her pen in support of the cause; and among the many efforts which were made on both sides to unite wit with politics, hers were reckoned the most successful; but as she was not known to have been the author of them, her vanity could not have been much gratified.

"In the spring of 1777 she lost her eldest son in his eleventh year. His delicate health from his birth had particularly endeared him to his mother, and she felt this affliction in proportion to her extreme affection for him. She had looked to him as a future friend and companion; and it was observed by some of her intimates, that a visible change in her character took place after this event. To divert her mind from this irremediable calamity, and from the contemplation of the many anxieties which oppressed her, she amused herself by composing her first Sonnets, which were never intended for publication. I believe it was the late Bryan Edwards, Esq., author of the *History of the West Indies*, and some poems of great elegance, who, by his warm and gratifying praises, first gave her an opinion of their merit, to which she had not before considered them entitled, and she was encouraged to add to her little collection.

"The peace of 1782 deprived Mr. Smith of his contract. The legatees became importunate for the settlement of their respective claims, and, wearied by incessant delay, at length took those strong measures which are detailed in the third volume of *Public Characters*.[2] The estate in Hampshire was sold. Mrs.

[1] Name not recollected.

[2] ["On a subject of so much delicacy it would be improper to dwell: those who witnessed Mrs. Smith's conduct, both while she apprehended the evils that now overtook her, or while she suffered under them, can alone do her justice, or can judge, at least as far as a single instance goes, whether the mind which feels the enthusiasm of poetry, and can indulge in the visionary regions of romance, is always so enervated as to be unfitted for the more arduous tasks and severe trials of human life. Neither the fears of entering into scenes of calamity, nor of suffering in her health, already weakened, prevented her from partaking the lot of her husband, with whom she passed the greater part of seven months in legal confinement, and whose release was at the end of that time obtained chiefly by her indefatigable

Smith never deserted her husband for a moment during the melancholy period of his misfortunes, and perhaps her conduct never was so deserving of admiration as at this time. When suffering from the calamities he had brought on himself, and in which he had inextricably involved her and her children, she exerted herself with as much zeal and energy as if his conduct had been unexceptionable—made herself mistress of his affairs—submitted to many humiliating applications, and encountered the most unfeeling repulses. Perhaps the severest of her tasks, as well as the most difficult, was that of employing her superior abilities in defending a conduct she could not have approved. To a mind so ingenuous as hers, there could not have been a more painful sacrifice of talents at the shrine of duty. The estates were at length placed in the hands of trustees, and Mr. and Mrs. Smith were at liberty to return to their house in Sussex, which they had taken when Lys Farm was sold.[1]

exertions. But during this seven months some of her hours were passed at the house in Hampshire, which was now sold, under such circumstances as those who, in that sad hour, deserted her, are now as unwilling to hear of as she is to relate them. What were then her sentiments in regard to the summer friends, who so little a time before had courted her acquaintance, and delighted in her company! Of her relations, her brother only never for a moment relaxed in his tenderness and attention towards her, or in such acts of friendship as he had the power of performing towards her husband. It was the experience she acquired, during these seven months, *of the chicanery of law, and the turpitude of many of its professors, that, were it proper to enter into the detail, would fully justify those indignant feelings, which, on various occasions, she has not hesitated to express.*"—*Public Characters*, vol. iii., pp. 48-9.]

[1] [After a day of excessive fatigue, which had succeeded to the most cruel solicitudes, Mrs. Smith at length experienced the satisfaction (the deed of trust having been signed) of beholding her husband freed from his confinement, and accompanied him immediately into Sussex, where their family remained under the care of their maternal uncle. Her sensations on this occasion are thus described in a letter to a friend:

"It was on the 2nd day of July that we commenced our journey. For more than a month I had shared the restraint of my husband in a prison, amidst scenes of misery, of vice, and even of terror. Two attempts had, since my last residence among them, been made by the prisoners to procure their liberation, by blowing up the walls of the house. Throughout the night appointed for this enterprise, I remained dressed, watching at the window, and expecting every moment to witness contention and bloodshed, or perhaps be overwhelmed by the projected explosion. After such scenes and such apprehensions, how deliciously soothing to my wearied spirits was the soft pure air of the summer's morning, breathing over the dewy grass, as (having slept one night on the road) we passed over the heaths of Surrey! My native hills at length burst upon my view. I beheld once more the fields where I had passed my happiest days, and, amidst the perfumed turf with which one of those fields was strewn, perceived with delight the beloved group, from whom I had been so long divided, and for whose fate my affections were ever anxious. The transports of this meeting were too much for my exhausted spirits. After all my sufferings, I began to hope I might taste content, or experience at least a respite from calamity."—*Public Characters*, vol. iii., p. 53.]

"The first edition of the Sonnets was published this year; the circumstances relating to them have already been amply detailed in the volume of the *Public Characters* already referred to;[1] they were dedicated to Mr. Hayley, but I believe her personal introduction to him did not take place till some time afterwards. Mr. Smith found it expedient to retire to the Continent, and, as he was entirely ignorant of the French language, his wife accompanied him to Dieppe, and having made such arrangements for his comfort as the time admitted of, she returned in the same packet which had taken her over, with the hope of surmounting the fresh difficulties that had arisen; but this not being practicable, she soon rejoined him with all her family. Mr. Smith in the meantime had been induced, with his usual indiscretion, to engage a large chateau twelve Norman miles from Dieppe. The inconvenience of the situation, so far from a market—the dreariness of the house, extremely out of repair—the excessive scarcity of fuel, and the almost brutal manners of the peasantry in that insulated part of the country, rendered her situation most melancholy. Yet here she was condemned to pass the peculiarly severe winter of 1783; and here, without proper assistance or accommodation, she was confined with her youngest son; and, in spite of her forebodings that she should not survive the birth of her child, she recovered her health more speedily than on former occasions, when surrounded with every sort of indulgence and comfort.[2]

"A few days afterwards, she was astonished by the entrance of a procession of priests into her bedroom, who, in defiance of her entreaties and tears, forcibly carried off the infant to be baptised in the parish church, though the snow was deep on the ground and the cold intense. As no one of her children had ever been exposed to the external air at so early a period of their existence, she concluded her boy could never survive this cruel act of the authority of the church: he was, however, soon restored to her, without having sustained the slightest ill consequence. It was during her seclusion in this forlorn residence,

[1] [*Elegiac Sonnets, and other Essays*, 4to, 1784. The authoress applied in vain to several booksellers; and at length succeeded in getting this little work published, owing to the benevolent intervention of Mr. Hayley with Mr. Dodsley. We are told, in the *Public Characters*, that "The immediate success of the thin quarto edition more than justified its author's confidence; a second edition was soon called for; while the profits of the work, in its progress, relieved the writer from those solicitudes for her children which had weighed down her spirits, and enabled her to look forward with fortitude to the period which should disembarrass their father's affairs."]

[2] See *Public Characters*.

and when she had no power of selection, that, for the amusement of herself and some English friends (exiles like herself), she translated the novel called *Manon L'Escaut*, written about fifty years before by the Abbé Prevost; and soon after her return to England, which took place in the summer of 1785 (for she had been convinced of the fallacy of her plan of living cheaply in France), this translation was published, and she was severely censured for her choice as immoral; but I believe it was the want of the power of selection which induced her to employ a mind qualified for worthier purposes on such a work. The author himself considers his work as strictly moral, and tells us in his preface, that

'Les personnes de bon sens ne regarderont pas un ouvrage de cette nature comme un travail inutile. Outre le plaisir d'une lecture agréable on y trouvera peu d'evènemens qui ne puissent servir à l'instruction des mœurs; et c'est rendre, à mon avis, un service considerable au public que de l'instruire en l'amusant.' The good Abbé, after much more in the same style, concludes his preface by assuring his readers, 'Que l'ouvrage entier est un traité de morale reduit agréablement en exercice.'

"I have quoted thus far, in order to contrast the French with the English moralist, a friend having permitted me to avail myself of the following letter from the late celebrated Mr. Steevens, to whom Mrs. Smith had ordered a copy to be presented.

'To Miss ——

DEAR MADAM,

'I had purchased *Manon L'Escaut* several days before Mrs. Smith's obliging present arrived; I have therefore returned it to Cadell, and beg you will inform your friend of this circumstance, lest the book should be charged to her account. I am equally obliged by her intention, though the negligence of her bookseller has defeated it. *Manon* seems to be very ably translated; but of this I can be no adequate judge, having never seen the French original.

'When Mrs. Smith can be prevailed on to employ her admirable talents on subjects more worthy of them than Werters and Manons, I will always be happy to do everything in my power to promote the success of her pen; but I tell you fairly, that such heroes and such heroines shall never obtain the smallest recommendation from me.

The wise and good I pity in misfortune:
But when ingratitude and folly suffer,
'Tis weakness to be touch'd.

'Pray where lies the moral of pointing out, that the most exalted

sentiments will not secure us from being guilty of the most profligate actions? Love is the only ingredient which keeps the character of the Chevalier sweet. He is a seducer, a hypocrite, an undutiful son, an ungrateful friend, a cheat, a gambler, a murderer, etc., etc.; and must all this be forgiven, because the source of it is a violent attachment to a beautiful wanton? She, too, only interests us, because at bottom she is supposed to have some real love for her paramour, though a casual indigence, a temporary deprivation of dissipation, seldom fails to cure her of too much amorous weakness for her pretended favourite.

'I am beyond measure provoked at books, which philtre the passions of young people till they admit the weakest apologies for licentiousness; and this story is so managed, that one cannot occasionally withhold one's pity from two characters, which, on serious reflection, ought every way to be condemned. But I would ask, How are the hero and heroine punished? She dies, not in consequence of her vices, but drops by a natural though sudden attack of illness, and at the age of twenty-two he is liberated from a female, from whom he has received as much delight as sorrow; and we are left to suppose his father's death, which his misconduct had hastened, has been the instrument of restoring him to affluence and happiness. He has been, in short, too much a dupe to preserve one's respect, and too much a profligate to claim one's pity; yet I must confess we are cheated now and then of the latter by partial situations, and yet the fraud is successful only for an instant. The tablet of Nature may exhibit such contradictory beings as our Chevalier, who admires the necessity of laws divine and human, and violates them all. Yet these are not the characters on which a conscientious moralist would expend his decorations. The shield may be lifted in defence of virtue, but this defensive armour, with such meretricious imagery, cannot fail to defeat every moral purpose.

'The most picturesque and interesting passage, in my opinion, is the first appearance of Manon in chains. Afterwards you grow tired of situations that bear a near resemblance to each other, and it was with difficulty I could get through the second volume.

'To dwell on the improbabilities of the story, would be a waste of criticism; and the hair-combing scene is so ridiculously French, that I wonder Mrs. Smith did not omit it. So much love and improbability cannot, however, fail to give it many admirers. I am, dear madam, etc., etc., GEORGE STEEVENS.'

"I have before observed, that it was accident, rather than choice, which directed Mrs. Smith to this little work, which (exclusive of the severe though just criticism of Mr. Steevens) was the cause of great vexation; however, had she had the power of selecting from among the most celebrated of the French novelists, and even from those more recently published—however admired and extolled—it may be questioned if she had not incurred the same censure; and those who insist on strict morality must seek it from a purer source.

"Soon after the publication of *Manon L'Escaut*, Mrs. Smith received from her publisher at Chichester the following letter, which had appeared in the *Public Advertiser*:—

'Sir,

'Literary frauds should be made known as soon as discovered; please to acquaint the public that the novel called *Manon L'Escaut*, just published in two volumes octavo, has been twice before printed in English, once annexed to the Marquis de Bretagne, and once by itself, under the title of the Chevalier de Grieux—it was written by the Abbé Prevost about 40 or 50 years ago. I am, sir, your old correspondent, 'Scourge.'

"The Publisher added, 'I have seen Mr. Cadell, who was apprehensive that the reviewers would lay hold of this letter, and that such an assertion would be of ill consequence, not only in regard to the sale of the book, but to himself, as the public would consider him as endeavouring to impose on it, and his reputation might be injured. I take the liberty of repeating this to you, because, as I assured Mr. Cadell, the circumstance was as unknown to you as to himself. The sale is at present at a stand. I am, madam, etc.'

"Thus were Mrs. Smith's laudable exertions embittered by the attacks, either of wanton and unprovoked malice, or the artifice of a concealed enemy; and, in aggravation of her private misfortunes, she was taught to feel all the penalties and discouragement attached to the profession of an author. She was not without her suspicions of the quarter from whence this blow was aimed, though it would be difficult to discover the motive; and the following letter will show which way her conjectures pointed:—

'To Miss ——

'When I found, from your first communication of Mr. ——'s critique, that he greatly disapproved this humble story, which I hardly imagined he would think it worth his while to read, I hoped that what he could not praise he would at least forbear to blame; but, it seems, even if I had been under the circumstances which he says could alone justify, or rather palliate, the dispensation of such literary poison, it is evident such a plea would not have softened the asperity of his criticism, or slacken his invincible zeal for public justice, in detecting what he terms a literary fraud, which seems to me a term rather harsh; for I really see no fraud in a person endeavouring to make a better translation of a work already translated. A fraud means a thing which the imposer hopes to make pass for what it is not. This, surely, could not be the case with the book in question. I never pretended it was otherwise than a translation; and whether it was the first or the second, I was as

perfectly ignorant as I believe most of my readers were; and had I been as well informed as Monsr. Scourge himself, I should have thought it very immaterial, for I am persuaded the former translations are very little known, and have probably been out of print for years. I will venture to say, they are not to be found in any catalogue of the circulating libraries; and perhaps are only known to those who would take the pains to seek after such trumpery; and I leave to your suggestion whether any one is so likely to take the trouble as your friend, or so likely to succeed if he did. Do not imagine, however, I mean to bounce and fly in the . . . style, about this said letter; I only wish it had not happened, and that he had given the book a more gentle damnation, and at least have suffered it to have lived its day, which is all I expected. As it is, I shall withdraw the book rather than let Cadell suffer.

'I have the pleasure to add, that the last edition of the Sonnets is, as Jacques informs me, so nearly all sold, that it is high time to consider of another edition, which, however, I shall not do hastily, as I intend they shall appear in a very different form as to size and correctness, and I think I shall be able to add considerably to the bulk of the volume.'

"In comparing this instance of wanton malignity with traits of the same description, related by Miss Hawkins, in her *Anecdotes*, of which Garrick was the object, and one mentioned by Mr. Hayley, in his Memoirs, there can be no doubt but this arrow came from the same quiver. Those gentlemen lived in habits of intimacy with the celebrated editor of Shakspeare; Mrs. Smith had no personal acquaintance with him, and could never have excited his spleen or his envy!

"Mrs. Smith was at this time employed in translating some of the most remarkable trials, from *Les Causes Célébres*, which were published under the title of *The Romance of Real Life*, which, from the great difficulty attending it, helped to complete her disgust, and determined her to rely in future on her own resources, and to employ herself in original composition.

"In the spring of 1786, her eldest son was appointed to a writership in Bengal, and though he went out with more than usual advantages, it was a severe trial to a most tender and anxious mother; but an affliction yet more poignant awaited her in the same year, when her second son was carried off, after only thirty-six hours' illness, by a fever of the most malignant nature, which, spreading through the family, reduced several of the children and servants to the brink of the grave; but by her personal exertions they were restored, and she escaped the infection.

"They were at this time residing at Woolbeding House, near Midhurst, which they had engaged after their return from

France in 1785, but Mrs. Smith was not destined to be stationary in any residence. An increasing incompatibility of temper, which had rendered her union a source of misery for twenty-three years, determined her on separating from her husband; and, after an ineffectual appeal to one of the members of the family to assist her in the adjustment of the terms, but with the entire approbation of her most dispassionate and judicious friends, she withdrew from Woolbeding House, accompanied by all her children, some of them of an age to judge for themselves, and who all decided on following the fortunes of their mother.

"She settled in a small house in the environs of Chichester, and her husband, soon afterwards finding himself involved in fresh difficulties, again retired to the continent, after having made some ineffectual efforts to induce her to return to him. They sometimes met after this period, and constantly corresponded, Mrs. Smith never relaxing in her endeavours to afford him every assistance, and bring the family affairs to a final arrangement; but they never afterwards resided together. Though the decisive step she had taken in quitting her husband's house was perhaps, under the then existing circumstances, unavoidable, yet, I have been told, the manner was injudicious, and that she should have insisted on previous legal arrangements, and secured to herself the enjoyment of her own fortune. That she was liable to much unmerited censure was a matter of course; but those who knew the *dessous des cartes*, could only regret that the measure had not been adopted years before.

"The summer of 1787 saw Mrs. Smith established in her cottage at Wyhe, pursuing her literary occupations with much assiduity and delight, supplying to her children the duties of both parents. It was here that she began and completed, in the space of eight months, her first, and perhaps most pleasing, novel of *Emmeline*, and its success was very general. It was published in the spring of 1788, and the whole of the first edition, 1500, sold so rapidly that a second was immediately called for; and the late Mr. Cadell found his profits so considerable that he had the liberality, voluntarily, to augment the price he had agreed to give for it. The success of her volume of Sonnets was equally gratifying, and, exclusive of profit and reputation, procured her many valuable friends and estimable acquaintances, and some in the most exalted ranks of life; and it was not the least pleasing circumstance to a mother's heart that her son in Bengal owed his promotion in the civil service to her talents.

"The novel of *Ethelinde* was published in 1789; *Celestina* in 1791.

"She had quitted her cottage near Chichester, and lived sometimes in or near London, but chiefly at Brighthelmstone, where she formed acquaintances with some of the most violent advocates of the French Revolution, and unfortunately caught the contagion, though in direct opposition to the principles she had formerly professed, and to those of her family.

"It was during this paroxysm of political fever that she wrote the novel of *Desmond;* a work which has been greatly condemned, not only on account of its politics, but its immoral tendency. I leave its defence to an abler pen, and content myself with regretting its consequences. It lost her some friends, and furnished others with an excuse for withholding their interest in favour of her family, and brought a host of *literary ladies* in array against her, armed with all the malignity which envy could inspire!

"She had been in habits of intimacy for the two or three last years with Mr. Hayley (as well as with his lady), then at the height of his poetical reputation, but this was a distinction not to be enjoyed with impunity. His praise was considered as an encroachment on the rights of other muses (as he was accustomed to call his poetical female friends), each of whom claimed the monopoly of his adulation. In the present day the prize would scarcely be thought worth contending for. In 1792, Mrs. Smith made one of the party at Eastham when Cowper visited that spot. In 1793, her third son, who was serving as an ensign in the 14th regiment of infantry, lost his leg at Dunkirk;[1] and her own health began to sink under the pressure of so many afflictions, and continual harassing circumstances in which the family property was involved, in the arrangement of which her exertions were incessant. She removed to Bath, but received no benefit from the use of the waters. An imperfect gout had fixed itself on her hands, probably increased by the constant use of the pen, which nevertheless she continued to employ, though some of her fingers were become contracted. Her second daughter had been married to a gentleman of Normandy [the Chevalier de Foville], who had emigrated at the beginning of the Revolution. She fell into a decline after her first confinement, and died at Clifton in the spring of 1794. It would be impossible to describe the affliction Mrs. Smith experienced

[1] This estimable young man died a few years after, of the yellow fever, in Barbadoes.

on this occasion. Mothers only can comprehend it![1] From this time she became more than ever unsettled, moving from place to place in search of that tranquillity she was never destined to enjoy, yet continuing her literary occupation with astonishing application.

"The dates of her different works are recorded in the *Censura Literaria*, with the omission of a *History of England for the use of young persons*, which, I believe, was incomplete, and finished by some other person; and a *Natural History of Birds*, which was published in 1807.

"The delays in the settlement of the property, which was equally embarrassing to all parties, at length induced one of them to propose a compromise; and, by the assistance of a noble friend, an adjustment of the respective claims was effected, but not without considerable loss on all sides. Still she derived great satisfaction that her family would be relieved from the difficulties she had so long contended with, although she was personally but little benefited by it. So many years of mental anxiety and exertion had completely undermined a constitution, which nature seemed to have formed to endure unimpaired to old age; and, convinced that her exhausted frame was sinking under increasing infirmity, she determined on removing into Surrey, from a desire that her mortal remains might be laid with those of her mother, and many of her father's family, in Stoke Church, near Guildford. In 1803, she removed from Frans, near Tunbridge, to the village of Elsted, in the neighbourhood of Godalming. In the winter of 1804, I spent some time with her, when she was occupied in composing her charming little work for the use of young persons, entitled '*Conversations*,' which she occasionally wrote in the common sitting-room of the family, with two or three lively grandchildren playing about her, and conversing with great cheerfulness and pleasantry, though nearly confined to her sofa, in great bodily pain, and in a mortifying state of dependence on the services of others, but in the full possession of all her faculties; a blessing of which she was most justly sensible, and for which she frequently expressed her gratitude to the Almighty.

[1] ["How lovely and how beloved she was," says her afflicted mother in a letter to a friend, "those only who knew her can tell. In the midst of perplexity and distress, till the loss of my child, which fell like the hand of death upon me, I could yet exert my faculties; and, in the consciousness of resource which they afforded to me, experience a sentiment not dissimilar to that of the Medea of Corneille, who replied to the enquiry of her confidant—'Where now are your resources?'—'In myself!'"—*Public Characters*, vol. iii., p. 62.]

" In the following year she removed to Tilford, near Farnham, where her long sufferings were finally closed, on the 28th of October, 1806, in her 58th year. Mr. Smith's death took place the preceding March. She was buried at Stoke, in compliance with her wishes, where a neat monument, executed by Bacon, is erected to her memory, and that of two of her sons, Charles and George, both of whom perished in the West Indies, in the service of their country.[1]

" To this sketch of the Life of this admirable and much-injured woman, I am induced to attempt a delineation of her character, which, I think, has been as much misunderstood by her admirers as it has been misrepresented by her enemies. Those who have formed their ideas of her from her works, and even from what she says, in her moments of despondency, of herself, have naturally concluded that she was of a melancholy disposition; but nothing could be more erroneous. Cheerfulness and gaiety were the natural characteristics of her mind; and though circumstances of the most depressing nature at times weighed down her spirit to the earth, yet such was its buoyancy that it quickly returned to its level. Even in the darkest periods of her life, she possessed the power of abstracting herself from her cares; and, giving play to the sportiveness of her imagination, could make even the difficulties she was labouring under subjects of merriment, placing both persons and things in such ridiculous points of view, and throwing out such sallies of pleasantry, that it was impossible not to be delighted with her wit, even while deploring the circumstances that excited it. It was said, by the confessor of the celebrated Madame de Coulanges, that her sins were all epigrams: the observation might have been

[1] [" Of a family of twelve children, six only are living—three sons and three daughters. In her then surviving sons she was particularly happy—having lived to see the two elder ones advanced to honourable and lucrative appointments in the civil service of India, and both as high in character as in situation; their conduct towards their mother, to whom so much was due, and whom they loved so sincerely, was uniformly everything that gratitude could dictate, and affection inspire. Her two other sons were in the army—the eldest of them a lieutenant-colonel, now on service with his regiment, whose conduct as a son, a gentlemen, and a soldier, has ever been most truly gratifying to the feelings of a mother. The youngest son, who, with such a brother to excite his emulation, was advancing with credit and success in his military career, fell a second victim to the fatal fever at Surinam, the 16th of September, 1806, in his twenty-second year. His mother, who was particularly attached to him, was fortunate in being spared the misery of knowing he had preceded her to the grave—the sad tidings not having reached England till after her decease."—*Monthly Magazine*, April, 1807.]

applied with equal propriety to Mrs. Smith, who frequently gave her troubles a truly epigrammatic turn; she particularly excelled in little pieces of humorous poetry, in which she introduces so much fancy and elegance that one cannot but regret that, though some of them still exist, they are unintelligible except to the very few survivors who may yet recollect, with a melancholy pleasure, the circumstances that gave rise to them. She was very successful in parodies, and did not spare even her own poetry. In the society of persons she liked, and with whom she was under no restraint, with those who understood, and could enjoy her peculiar vein of humour, nothing could be more spirited, more racy, than her conversation; every sentence had its point, the effect of which was increased by the uncommon rapidity with which she spoke, as if her ideas flowed too fast for utterance; but among strangers, and with persons with whom she could not, or fancied she could not, assimilate, she was cold, silent, and abstracted, disappointing those who had sought her society in the expectation of entertainment.

"Notwithstanding her constant literary occupations, she never adopted the affectations, the inflated language, and exaggerated expressions, which literary ladies are often distinguished by, but always expressed herself with the utmost simplicity. She composed with greater facility than others could transcribe, and never would avail herself of an amanuensis, always asserting that it was more trouble to find them in comprehension than to execute the business herself; in fact, the quickness of her conception was such that she made no allowance for the slower faculties of others, and her impetuosity seldom allowed her time to explain herself with the precision required by less ardent minds. This hastiness of temper was one of the greatest shades in her character, and one of her greatest misfortunes. As her feelings were acute, she expressed her resentments with an asperity, the imprudence of which she was not aware of till it was too late, though perhaps she had forgotten the offence, and forgiven the offender, in ten minutes; but those who smarted under the severity of her lash were not so easily appeased, and she certainly created many enemies, from acting too frequently from the impulse of the moment.

"She was always the friend of the unfortunate, and spared neither her time, her talents, nor even her purse, in the cause of those she endeavoured to serve; and with a heart so warm, it may easily be believed she was frequently the dupe of her benevolence. The poor always found in her a kind protectress, and

she never left any place of residence without bearing with her their prayers and regrets.

"No woman had greater trials as a wife; very few could have acquitted themselves so well! But her conduct for twenty-three years speaks for itself. She was a most tender and anxious mother, and if she carried her indulgence to her children too far, it is an error too general to be very severely reprobated. To shield them as much as possible from the mortifying consequences of loss of fortune was the object of her indefatigable exertions. Her reward was in their affection and gratitude, and in the approval of her own heart. If she derived a high degree of gratification in the homage paid to her talents, it was embittered by the envenomed shafts of envy and bigotry, and by the calumnies of anonymous defamers. By some she has been censured, because there is no religion in her works, though I believe there is not a line that implies the want of it in herself; and I am of opinion that Mrs. Smith would have considered it as a subject much too sacred to be needlessly and irreverently brought forward in a work of fiction adapted for the hours of relaxation, not for those of serious reflection. Nor was it then the fashion of the day, as it has become since. No one then took up a novel in the expectation of finding a sermon. 'Religious Courtships' had not been revived, nor had Cœlebs commenced his peregrinations in Search of a Wife. In introducing politics in one of her works, she incurred equal censure, and with greater reason; it was sinning against good taste in a female writer—perhaps there was a little personal spleen mixed up with her patriotism.

"Mrs. Smith's reputation as an author rests less on her prose works (which were frequently hastily written, in sickness and in sorrow), than on her poetry. Her Sonnets and other Poems have passed through eleven editions, and have been translated into French and Italian; and so highly were her talents estimated that, on the death of Dr. Warton, she was requested to supply his epitaph, which she declined, though she could not but feel the value of such a compliment, from the members of a society so fertile in poets as Winchester College.

"Mrs. Smith left no *posthumous* works whatever. The sweepings of her closet were, without exception, committed to the flames. The novel published about three years ago, with her name affixed to it, with an intention of imposing it on the public as her work, is a fraud which, it seems, the law affords no redress for. Those who have looked into it assure me there is sufficient

evidence in the work itself to defeat the intention, and that no person of common sense can be deceived by it; but a more public exposure of such an imposition is required, in justice to Mrs. Smith's memory.

" In closing this melancholy retrospection of a life so peculiarly and so invariably marked by adversity, it is impossible not to experience the keenest regret that a being with a mind so highly gifted, a heart so alive to every warm and generous feeling; with beauty to delight, and virtues to attach all hearts; so formed herself for happiness, and so eminently qualified to dispense it to others, should have been, from her early youth, the devoted victim of folly, vice, and injustice! Who but must contrast her miserable destiny with the brilliant station she would have held in the world under happier circumstances? But her guardian angel slept! " [1]

We have already observed that our path through " this most pleasant land of faëry " had been brought to an abrupt conclusion before the works of Mrs. Smith had been included in the collection to which these notices refer. This has deprived us of the opportunity of reconsidering, with some care, the productions of an authoress from whom we ought to acknowledge having received more pleasure than from others whom we have had an opportunity of reviewing in greater detail. Something, however, is due to the public; and though we write without having Mrs. Smith's works before us, and our recollections are of a distant date, yet they are deeply impressed on our memory, and, though of a general character, we trust they will not be found vague or inaccurate.

We must, as a preliminary, take the liberty somewhat to differ from the obliging correspondent to whom we are so much indebted, where she considers Mrs. Smith's prose as much inferior to her poetry. We allow the great beauty of the sonnets, nor are we at all moved by the pedantic objection that their

[1] [" Should it appear in the present memoir that superior endowments exempt not the possessor from the accidents and calamities of life, or that even in some situations they add poignancy to the sense of those calamities; yet, let it not be forgotten that a cultivated imagination possesses in itself an independent source of peculiar and appropriate enjoyment, compared with which, in richness and variety, the pleasures of sense are mean and scanty. When wearied with the futility of society, or disgusted with its vices, it is the privilege of genius to retire within itself, to call up, with creative power, new worlds, and people solitude with ideal beings. It is to the improved taste and feeling heart that Nature, unveiling her charms, gives a zest to simple pleasures, and sheds over ordinary objects a touching grace."—*Public Characters*, vol. iii., p. 42.]

structure, in two elegiac quatrains, terminated by a couplet, differs from that of the legitimate sonnet invented by the Italians, and imitated by Milton, and other English authors, from their literature. The quality of the poetry appears to us of much more importance than the structure of the verse; and the more simple model of Mrs. Smith's sonnets is equally or better fitted for the theme, generally melancholy and sentimental, which she loves to exercise her genius upon, than would have been the complicated and involved form of the regular Italian sonnet. But, while we allow high praise to the sweet and sad effusions of Mrs. Smith's muse, we cannot admit that by these alone she could ever have risen to the height of eminence which we are disposed to claim for her as authoress of her prose narratives. The elegance, the polish, the taste, and the feeling of this highly-gifted lady, may no doubt be traced in Mrs. Charlotte Smith's poetry. But for her invention, that highest property of genius, her knowledge of the human bosom, her power of natural description, her wit, and her satire, the reader must seek in her prose narratives.

We remember well the impression made on the public by the appearance of *Emmeline, or the Orphan of the Castle*, a tale of love and passion, happily conceived, and told in a most interesting manner. It contained a happy mixture of humour, and of bitter satire mingled with pathos, while the characters, both of sentiment and of manners, were sketched with a firmness of pencil, and liveliness of colouring, which belong to the highest branch of fictitious narrative. One fault, we well remember, struck us, and other young readers such as we then were. There is (or at least was, for it may have passed away since we experienced such sensations) a strain of chivalrous feeling in the mind of youth, which objects to all change and shadow of turning on the part of the hero and the heroine of the novel. As the favoured youth is expected to be

> "A knight of love, who never broke a vow;"

so the lady, on her side, must be not only true of promise, but, under every temptation, faithful to her first affection. So much is this the case that we have not known any instance in which the heroine is made to pass through the purgatory of a previous marriage ere the end of the work assigned her to her first well-beloved, which has not, for that reason, given sore offence to the reader. Now Emmeline (completely justified, we acknowledge, in reason, and still more in prudence) breaks off her en-

gagement with the fiery, high-spirited, but noble and generous Delamere, to attach herself to a certain Mr. Godolphin, of whose merits we are indeed told much, but in whom we do not feel half so much interested as in poor Delamere; perhaps because we are acquainted with the faults as well as virtues of the last, and pity him for the misfortunes to which the authoress condemns him in partiality for her favourite.

It may be said by some that this is a boarding-school objection. All we can answer is, that we felt it natural at the time when we read the book. It may be said, also, that passion, and sacrifices to passion, are a dangerous theme, when addressed to youth; yet we cannot help thinking that prudence, as it is in a distinguished manner the virtue, so it is in some sense the vice of the present time; and that there is little chance of Cupid, king of gods and men, recovering any very perilous share of his influence during an age in which selfishness is so predominant. It seems at least hard that the novelists of the present day should be amongst the first to uplift the heel against the poor little blind boy, who is naturally their tutelar deity; yet so generally has this been the case, as to recall the complaint of old D'Avenant—

> "The press is now Love's foe, Love's foe,
> They have seized on his arrows, his quiver, his bow;
> They have shorn off his pinions, and fetter'd his feet,
> Because he made way for lovers to meet."

The *Recluse of the Lake*, though the love tale be less interesting, owing to a sort of fantastic romance attached to the hero Montgomery, is in other respects altogether fit to stand beside the *Orphan of the Castle*. The cold-hearted, yet coquettish woman of fashion, Lady Newenden, who becomes vicious out of mere *ennui*, is very well drawn, and so are the female horse-jockey and the brutal buck.

Mrs. Smith's powers of satire were great, but they seldom exhibit a playful or light character. Her experience had unfortunately led her to see life in its most melancholy features, so that follies, which form the jest of the fortunate, had to her been the source of disquiet and even distress. The characters we have just enumerated, with others to be found in her works, are so drawn as to be detested rather than laughed at; and at the sporting parson and some others less darkly shaded, we smile in scorn, but without sympathy. The perplexed circumstances in which her family affairs were placed induced Mrs. Smith to judge with severity the trustees who had the management of

these matters; and the introduction of one or two legal characters (men of business, as they are called) into her popular novels, left them little to congratulate themselves on having had to do with a lady whose pen wore so sharp a point. Even Mr. Smith's foibles did not escape. In spite of "awful rule and right supremacy," we recognise him in the whimsical projector, who hoped to make a fortune by manuring his estate with old wigs. This satire may not have been uniformly well merited; for ladies who see sharply and feel keenly are desirous sometimes to arrive at their point without passing through the forms which the law, rather than lawyers, throws in the way. A bitter excess of irritability will, however, be readily excused by those who have read, in the preceding Memoir, the agitating, provoking, and distressing circumstances in which Mrs. Smith was involved during the greater part of her existence. Her literary life also had its own peculiar plagues, to the character of which she has borne sufficient testimony in one of her later novels. There is an admirable correspondence between a literary lady and some gentlemen of the trade, which illustrates the uncertainty and vexation to which the life of an author is subjected.

The *chef-d'œuvre* of Mrs. Smith's works is, according to our recollection, the *Old Manor House*, especially the first part of the story, where the scene lies about the ancient mansion and its vicinity. Old Mrs. Rayland is without a rival; a Queen Elizabeth in private life, jealous of her immediate dignities and possessions, and still more jealous of the power of bequeathing them. Her letter to Mr. Somerive, in which she intimates rather than expresses her desire to keep young Orlando at the Hall, while she is so careful to avoid committing herself by any direct expression of her intentions with respect to him, is a masterpiece of diplomacy, equal to what she of Tudor could have composed on a similar occasion. The love of the young people thrown together so naturally, its innocence and purity, and the sort of perils with which they are beset, cannot fail deeply to interest all those who are interested by this peculiar species of literature. The unexpected interview with Jonas the smuggler furnishes an opportunity for varying the tale with a fine scene of natural terror, drawn with a masterly hand.

In the *Old Manor House* there are also some excellent sketches of description; but such are indeed to be found in all Mrs. Smith's works; and it is remarkable that the sea-coast scenery of Dorset and Devon, with which she must have been familiar, is scarce painted with more accuracy of description than the

tower upon a rugged headland on the coast of Caithness, which she could only become acquainted with by report. So readily does the plastic power of genius weave into a wreath materials, whether collected by the artist or by other hands. It may be remarked that Mrs. Smith not only preserves in her landscapes the truth and precision of a painter, but that they sometimes evince marks of her own favourite pursuits and studies. The plants and flowers are described by their Linnæan names, as well as by their vulgar epithets; and in speaking of the denizens of air, the terms of natural history are often introduced. Something like this may be observed in Mr. Crabbe's poems; but neither in these nor in Mrs. Smith's novels does it strike the reader that there is pedantry in such details; an objection which certainly would occur were such scientific ornaments to be used by a meaner hand.

The most deficient part of Mrs. Smith's novels is unquestionably the plot, or narrative, which, in general, bears the appearance of having been hastily *run up*, as the phrase goes, without much attention to probability or accuracy of combination. This was not owing to any deficiency in invention; for when Charlotte Smith had leisure, and chose to employ it to the purpose, her story, as in the *Orphan of the Castle*, is conducted with unexceptionable ingenuity. But she was too often summoned to her literary labours by the inexorable voice of necessity, which obliged her to write for the daily supply of the press, without having previously adjusted, perhaps without having even roughhewn, the course of incidents which she intended to detail. Hence the hurry and want of connection which may be observed in some of her stories, and hence, too, instances, in which we can see that the character of the tale has changed, while it was yet in the author's imagination, and has in the end become different from what she herself had originally proposed. This is apt to arise either from the author having forgotten the thread of the story, or her having, in the progress of the narrative, found it more difficult to disentangle it skilfully than her first concoction of the tale had induced her to hope. This desertion of the story is, no doubt, an imperfection; for few of the merits which a novel usually boasts are to be preferred to an interesting and well-arranged story. But then this merit, however great, has been never considered as indispensable to fictitious narrative. On the contrary, in many of the best specimens of that class of composition—*Gil Blas*, for example, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Roderick Random*, and many others of the first eminence—no effort what-

ever is made to attain the praise belonging to a compact system of adventures, in which the volumes which succeed the first, like the months of summer maturing the flowers and fruit which have germinated in spring, slowly conduct the tale to the maturity at which it arrives upon its conclusion, as autumn gathers in the produce of the year. On the contrary, the adventures, however delightful in themselves, are but

"Like orient pearls at random strung,"

and are not connected together, otherwise than as having occurred to one individual, and in the course of one man's life. In fine, whatever may be the vote of the severer critics, we are afraid that many of the labourers in this walk of literature will conclude with Bayes, by asking, "What is the use of the plot but to bring in fine things?" And, truly, if the fine things really deserve the name, we think there is pedantry in censuring the works where they occur, merely because productions of genius are not also adorned with a regularity of conception, carrying skilfully forward the conclusion of the story, which we may safely pronounce one of the rarest attainments of art.

The characters of Mrs. Smith are conceived with truth and force, though we do not recollect any one which bears the stamp of actual novelty; and indeed, an effort at introducing such, unless the author is powerfully gifted with the inventive faculty, is more likely to produce monsters than models of composition. She is uniformly happy in supplying them with language fitted to their station in life; nor are there many dialogues to be found which are at once so entertaining, and approach so nearly to truth and reality. The evanescent tone of the highest fashionable society is not easily caught, nor perhaps is it desirable it should be, considering the care which is taken in these elevated regions to deprive conversation of everything approaching to the emphasis of passion, or even of serious interest. But of every other species of dialogue, from the higher to the lower classes of her countrymen, Mrs. Smith's works exhibit happy specimens; and her portraits of foreigners, owing to her long residence abroad, are not less striking than those of Britons.

There is yet another attribute of Mrs. Smith's fictitious narratives, which may be a recommendation, or the contrary, as it affects readers of various temperaments, or the same reader in a different mood of mind. We allude to the general tone of melancholy which pervades her composition, and of which every one who has read the preceding Memoir can no longer be at a

loss to assign the cause. The conclusions of her novels, it is true, are generally fortunate, and she has spared her readers, who have probably enough arising out of their own concerns to make them anxious and unhappy, the uncomfortable feeling of having wasted their hour of leisure upon making themselves yet more sad and uncomfortable than before, by the unpleasant conclusion of a tale which they had taken up for amusement. The sky, though it uniformly lours upon us through Mrs. Smith's narrations, breaks forth on the conclusion, and cheers the scene when we are about to part from it. Still, however, we long for a few sunny glimpses to enliven the landscape in the course of the story, and with these we are rarely supplied; so that the general influence of melancholy can scarce be removed by the assurance that our favourites are at length married and prosperous. The hasty and happy catastrophe seems so inconsistent with the uniform persecutions of Fortune, through the course of the story, that we cannot help doubting whether adversity had exhausted her vial, or whether she had not farther misfortunes in store for them after the curtain was dropped by the authoress. Those who have few sorrows of their own, as Coleridge beautifully expresses it,[1] love the tales which call forth a sympathy for which their own feelings give little occasion; while others, exhausted by the actual distresses of life, relish better those narratives which steal them from a sense of sorrow. But every one, whether of sad or gay temperament, must regret that the tone of melancholy which pervades Mrs. Smith's compositions was derived too surely from the circumstances and feelings of the amiable authoress. We are indeed informed by Mrs. Dorset that the natural temper of her sister was lively and playful; but it must be considered that the works on which she was obliged, often reluctantly, to labour were seldom undertaken from free choice. Nothing saddens the heart so much as that sort of literary labour which depends on the imagination, when it is undertaken unwillingly, and from a sense of compulsion. The galley-slave may sing when he is unchained, but it would be uncommon equanimity which could induce him to do so when he is actually bound to his oar. If there is a mental drudgery which lowers the spirits and lacerates the nerves, like the toil of the slave, it is that which is exacted

[1] "Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope, my joy, my Genevieve;
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that made her grieve."

Love.

by literary composition when the heart is not in unison with the work upon which the head is employed. Add to the unhappy author's task, sickness, sorrow, or the pressure of unfavourable circumstances, and the labour of the bondsman becomes light in comparison.

Before closing a rough attempt to discharge the debt we owe in acknowledgment of many pleasant hours derived from the perusal of Mrs. Smith's works, we cannot but remark the number of highly-talented women, who have, within our time of novel-reading, distinguished themselves advantageously in this department of literature. Besides the living excellence of Mrs. D'Arblay, and of Maria Edgeworth, of the authoress of *Marriage* and the *Inheritance*, and of Mrs. Opie, the names arise on us of Miss Austen, the faithful chronicler of English manners, and English society of the middling, or what is called the genteel class; besides also Mrs. Radcliffe, Miss Reeves, and others, to whom we have endeavoured to do some justice in these sheets. We have to thank Mrs. Inchbald, the authoress of *Frankenstein*, Mrs. Bennet, too, and many other women of talents, for the amusement which their works have afforded; and we must add that we think it would be impossible to match against these names the same number of masculine competitors, arising within the same space of time. The fact is worthy of notice: although, whether it arises from mere chance; whether the less marked and more evanescent shades of modern society are more happily painted by the finer pencil of a woman; or whether our modern delicacy, having excluded the bold and sometimes coarse delineations permitted to ancient novelists, has rendered competition more easy to female writers, because the forms must be veiled and clothed with drapery—is a subject which would lead us far, and which, therefore, it is not our present purpose to enter into.

MISS ANNA SEWARD

The following Sketch was originally prefixed to an edition of Miss Seward's works.[1]

THE name of Anna Seward has for many years held a high rank in the annals of British literature; and the public has a right to claim, upon the present occasion, some brief memorials of her by whom it was distinguished. As the tenor of her life was retired, though not secluded, and uniform, though not idle, the task of detailing its events can neither be tedious nor uninstructive.

Miss Seward's father was the Reverend Thomas Seward, Rector of Eyam, in Derbyshire, Prebendary of Salisbury, and Canon Residentiary of Lichfield. In his youth he travelled as tutor with Lord Charles Fitzroy, third son of the Duke of Grafton, a hopeful young nobleman, who died upon his travels in 1739. Mr. Seward returned to England, and soon after married Miss Elizabeth Hunter, daughter of Mr. Hunter, headmaster of the school at Lichfield, the preceptor of Johnson, and other eminent literary characters. Mr. Seward, upon his marriage, settled at his rectory of Eyam. In 1747, the second year of his marriage, Miss Seward was born. She had several sisters and one brother, but none survived the period of infancy except Miss Sarah Seward, whom her sister and parents were to lament at a later and more interesting stage of existence.

Mr. Seward was himself a poet; and a manuscript collection of his fugitive pieces is now lying before me, the bequest of my honoured friend, when she intrusted me with the task I am now endeavouring to discharge. Several of these effusions were printed in Dodsley's Collection, volume second, towards the close. Mr. Seward was also an admirer of our ancient drama; and, in 1750, published an edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, which, though falling beneath what is expected from the accuracy and investigation of later dramatic editors, evinces a scholarlike degree of information, and a high relish for the beauties of his authors. Thus accomplished himself, the talents

[1] [*The Poetical Works of Anna Seward, with extracts from her Literary Correspondence.* Edited by Walter Scott, Esq. 3 vols. post 8vo. Ballantyne & Co., Edinburgh; Longman & Co., London. 1810.]

of his eldest daughter did not long escape his complacent observation. He early introduced her to Milton and to Shakspeare; and I have heard her say that she could repeat passages from the Allegro before she was three years old. It were absurd to suppose that she could comprehend this poem even at a much later period of infancy; but our future taste does not always depend upon the progress of our understanding. The mechanism, the harmony of verse, the emotions which, though vague and indescribable, it awakens in children of a lively imagination and a delicate ear, contribute, in many instances, to imbue the infant mind with a love of poetry, even before they can tell for what they love it. Miss Seward was one of those gifted minds which catch eagerly at the intellectual banquet. The romantic hills of Derbyshire, where the village of Eyam is situated, favoured the instructions of her father. His pupil imbibed a strong and enthusiastic partiality for mountainous scenery, and in general for the pleasures of landscape, which was a source of enjoyment during her after life. Her father's taste was rigidly classical; and the authors to whom Miss Seward was introduced were those of Queen Anne's reign. She was early familiar with Pope, Young, Prior, and their predecessor, Dryden; and, in later life, used to make little allowance for poetry of an older date, excepting only that of Shakspeare and Milton.

The desire of imitating the compositions which gave her pleasure very early displayed itself. Anna Seward attempted metrical versions of the Psalms, and even exercised herself in original composition, before she was ten years old. An Address to the First Fine day of a Backward Spring, which has been preserved from those early days, intimates considerable command of numbers and language, though the ideas cannot be called original.

About 1754, Mr. Seward removed with his family to Lichfield, which continued ever afterwards to be his daughter's residence, although varied, during her father's life, by occasional visits to his rectory at Eyam. Lichfield, the birth-place of Johnson and of Garrick, and, necessarily, the residence of a body of learned and well-educated clergy attached to its cathedral, had been long distinguished by its classical pretensions. These were at this time exalted by its being the residence of the celebrated Dr. Darwin, who soon distinguished and appreciated the talents of our youthful poetess. Some lines had been shown to him, which he thought so far superior to her age that he conceived

they must have been written, or greatly improved, by her father. He contrived to engage her upon a poetic theme when Mr. Seward was absent, and the result of the experiment having ascertained the originality of her talents, Dr. Darwin thought them worthy of attentive cultivation. At this time, however, literature was deemed an undesirable pursuit for a young lady in Miss Seward's situation — the heiress of an independent fortune, and destined to occupy a considerable rank in society. Her mother, though an affectionate parent, and an excellent woman, possessed no taste for her daughter's favourite amusements; and even Mr. Seward withdrew his countenance from them, probably under the apprehension that his continued encouragement might produce in his daughter that dreaded phenomenon, a learned lady. Poetry was prohibited, and Miss Seward resorted to other amusements, and to the practice of ornamental needlework, in which she is said to have excelled. Thus rolled on time for nearly ten years after her father had settled in Lichfield. When it is considered that her attachment to literary pursuits bordered even upon the romantic, the merit of sacrificing them readily to the inclination of her parents deserves our praise. But other incidents occurred in her own life, and that of a confidential friend, that called for stronger exertions of prudence, self-denial, and submission to parental authority. There are, in Miss Seward's letters during this period, passages which show great firmness and steadiness of mind, and a capacity of compelling feelings, which nature, and perhaps early cultivation, had strung to a keen tone, to submit to the dictates of prudence and of duty. I regret that many of the lessons which she taught her own heart, and that of her friend, must be withheld from the public, lest, even at this distance of time, the incidents to which they relate might injure the feelings of any concerned in them.

In 1764, a heavy calamity took place in Mr. Seward's family. Miss Sarah Seward, his younger daughter, had been for some time on the eve of forming a matrimonial connection with Mr. Porter, a merchant at Leghorn, brother to Mrs. Lucy Porter of Lichfield, and son-in-law, of course, to the celebrated Dr. Johnson. Miss Anna Seward was to have accompanied her sister to Italy, and already anticipated, with delight, the pleasure of treading classical ground, of viewing the paintings of Raphael, and wandering among the groves of Valambrosa. These flattering prospects were clouded by the sickness and death of the young and lovely bride. An affecting account of this distressing

calamity occurs among the following extracts from Miss Seward's Correspondence.[1] Mr. Porter appears afterwards to have intimated a wish to transfer his attachment to the surviving sister; but it was not encouraged. When time had softened the recollection of this domestic loss, Miss Seward made her sister's death the subject of an elegy, which forms the first article in this collection of her poetry. The blank in her domestic society was supplied by the attachment of Miss Honora Sneyd, then residing in her family, and often mentioned in the ensuing volumes. This young lady was afterwards married to the late ingenious Mr. Edgeworth of Edgeworthstown, Ireland, father of the celebrated Maria Edgeworth.

After the death of Miss Sarah Seward, her sister Anna's society became indispensable to her parents, and she was never separated from them. Offers of matrimonial establishments occurred, and were rejected, in one instance entirely, and in others chiefly, from a sense of filial duty. As she was now of an age to select her own society and studies, Miss Seward's love of literature was indulged; and the sphere in which she moved was such as to increase her taste for its pursuits. Dr. Darwin, Mr. Day,[2] whose opinions formed singular specimens of English philosophy, Mr. Edgeworth, Sir Brooke Boothby,[3] and other names well known in the literary world,[4] then formed part of the

[1] These extracts are to be found in the volumes, to which the present sketch was originally prefixed. [See *Literary Correspondence* prefixed to Miss Seward's *Poetical Works*, vol. i., p. 125 to p. 144.]

[2] [The author of *Sandford and Merton*, etc.]

[3] [Author of *Fables and Satires*, with a preface on the Æsopian Fable, 2 vols. 8vo, 1809. For an estimate of the merits of this work, see *Quarterly Review*, Feb. 1810.]

[4] ["I was introduced," says Mr. Edgeworth, "to some literary persons, who then resided at Lichfield, and among the foremost to Miss Seward. How much of my future life has depended upon this visit to Lichfield! How little could I then foresee that my having examined and understood the Microcosm at Chester should lead me to a place, and into an acquaintance, which would otherwise, in all human probability, have never fallen within my reach! Miss Seward was at this time in the height of youth and beauty, of an enthusiastic temper, a votary of the Muses, and of the most eloquent and brilliant conversation. Our mutual acquaintance was soon made, and it continued to be for many years of my life a source of never-failing pleasure. It seems that Mrs. Darwin had a little pique against Miss Seward, who had in fact been her rival with the Doctor. These ladies lived upon good terms, but there frequently occurred little competitions, which amused their friends, and enlivened the uniformity, that so often renders a country town insipid. The evening after my arrival, Mrs. Darwin invited Miss Seward, and a very large party of her friends, to supper. I was placed beside Miss Seward, and a number of lively sallies escaped her, that set the table in good-humour.

"I paid Miss Seward, however, some compliments on her own beautiful tresses, and at that moment the watchful Mrs. Darwin took this opportunity

Lichfield society. The celebrated Dr. Johnson was an occasional visitor of their circles; but he seems, in some respects, to have shared the proverbial fate of a prophet in his own country. Neither Dr. Darwin nor Miss Seward were partial to the great moralist.[1] There was, perhaps, some aristocratic prejudice in their dislike, for the despotic manners of Dr. Johnson were least likely to be tolerated where the lowness of his origin was in fresh recollection. At the same time, Miss Seward was always willing to do justice to his native benevolence, and to

of drinking *Mrs. Edgeworth's health. Miss Seward's surprise was manifest.*" —*Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 165-7.]

[1] [Miss Seward appears to have seized every opportunity of disparaging and ridiculing Dr. Johnson, and in some instances, as Mr. Croker has proved, by means not consistent with facts. (See her *Letters*, 6 vols., and Croker's *Boswell*, vols. i. iii. iv. v.) The following letter shows that this spirit of detraction survived the death of her illustrious townsman:—

"LICHFIELD, *March* 23, 1785.

"A character of the late literary Colossus, written by me, appeared in the *General Evening Post* for December 27, 1784, without my name; because my friend, his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Lucy Porter, would resent the fidelity of the portrait. She thinks he was almost next to the Deity in perfection. Uncultivate minds are always in extremes respecting those high abilities whose elevation they cannot clearly discern. They are sure to contemplate them either with blind adoration, or blinder contempt. If Dr. Johnson's *heart* had been as comprehensively benevolent as his genius was comprehensive, the excess of unqualified praise, now poured upon his tomb, had been deserved. Unhappily for his own peace, as for the posthumous fame of our English classics, his adherence to truth was confined to trivial occurrences and abstract morality, his generosity to giving alms, his sincerity to those he *hated*, and his devotion to the gloom of religious terror. Truth from Dr. Johnson's lip yielded to misrepresentation, in his rage of casting rival excellence into shade. That generosity, which loves to place exalted genius and virtue in their fairest point of view, was a stranger to Johnson's heart. His violent desire of life, while he was continually expatiating upon its infelicity, the unphilosophic and coward horror with which he shrunk from the approach of death, proved that his religion was not of that amiable species which smooths the pillow of the dying man, and sheds upon it the light of religious hope. If the misleading force of his eloquence had not blighted the just pretensions of others, both to moral and intellectual excellence, I should not regret to see Johnson's character invested with this ideal splendour, since I always thought it for the interest of morality and literature to believe exalted genius *good* as *great*, and, in a considerable degree, exempt from human depravity; such belief having a natural tendency to inspirit the pursuit of excellence, and give force to the precepts of the moralist. But since he has industriously laboured to expose the defects, and defame the virtues and talents of his brethren in the race of literary glory, it is sacrificing the many to an individual, when, to exalt *him*, truth is thus involved, and hid in hyperbolic praise. O England! not less ungrateful than partial is thy boundless incense. Investing the gloomy devotion and merely pecuniary donations of Johnson with the splendour of faultless excellence, thou sacrificest an hecatomb of characters, most of them more amiable, and some of them yet greater in point of genius, to *his* manes!"—*Letter to Miss Weston*, vol. i., p. 35.]

the powerful grasp of his intellectual powers, and possessed many anecdotes of his conversation, which had escaped his most vigilant recorders. These she used to tell with great humour, and with a very striking imitation of the sage's peculiar voice, gesture, and manner of delivery.

Miss Seward's poetical powers appear to have lain dormant, or to have been only sparingly exercised, until her acquaintance with Lady Miller, whose fanciful and romantic institution at Bath Easton was then the subject of public attention. A concise account of this poetical association, which was graced by the names of Anstey and of Hayley, forms the preface to a poem which Miss Seward afterwards dedicated to the memory of its accomplished foundress. The applause of this selected circle gave Miss Seward courage to commit some of her essays to the press; and the public received with great favour the elegiac commemorations of André and of Cook. The first of these subjects was dictated by Miss Seward's personal friendship for the brave and unfortunate sufferer, who had sought to drown in the duties of his dangerous profession, the recollection of an ill-fated attachment to her friend, Miss Sneyd. The Elegy on Captain Cook was dictated by those feelings of admiration and gratitude, which, in common with Europe at large, Miss Seward felt for the firm and benevolent character of the dauntless navigator, and for his tragical destiny. It would be too much to claim for these productions the same warm interest which they excited while the melancholy events which they celebrated were glowing in the general recollection; but, even when the advantage which they derived from their being suited to "the form and pressure of the time" has passed away, they convey a high impression of the original powers of their author.

While Miss Seward's fame increased, it had the advantage, which she highly prized, of extending her acquaintance among those who were candidates for literary reputation. Many of the most distinguished she added to the circle of her friends. I need barely mention Mr. Hayley, Mr. Mundy, the author of two most beautiful poems on Needwood Forest; Mr. Crowe, author of the descriptive poem called *Lewesdone Hill;* Dr. Whalley, Mr. Fellowes, and many other persons of acknowledged talent and learning, with whom she maintained, through life, a constant correspondence. Miss Seward was an entire stranger to that paltry jealousy which too often disturbs the harmony of the literary world. She gave, with her whole soul, her applause to contemporary merit, and was not easily daunted in its defence.

A love and admiration for existing genius was a leading feature in her character. She was at all times ready with her advice, her encouragement, her purse, if necessary, to assist those whom timidity or indigence prevented from asserting their right to public notice. Nor would she readily admit the preference claimed for more ancient poets over those of her own century. "Many," she says, in a letter now before me, "excel me in the power of writing verse; perhaps scarcely one in the vivid and strong sensibility of its excellence, or in the ability to estimate its claims—ability arising from a fifty years' sedulous and discriminating study of the best English poets, and of the best translations from the Greek, Roman, and Italian. A masculine education cannot spare from professional study, and the necessary acquisition of languages, the time and attention which I have bestowed on the compositions of my countrymen. When the accumulating suffrage of centuries shall have mellowed the growing fame of the authors of this age, their equals, perhaps their superiors, at a future period, will be contrasting the superiority of this and the last century, with the littleness of recent and contemporary merit."

It cannot be denied that Miss Seward's friendships and partialities fortified her in the persuasion thus expressed. In friendship, indeed, she was an enthusiast, of which she gave, in 1778, an example too remarkable to be passed over, even in these brief biographical notices. In the summer of that year, the Countess of Northesk visited Lichfield, to consult Dr. Darwin for the benefit of her health, then sinking rapidly by hemorrhage. The poetical physician became deeply interested in the fate of a lovely and amiable young woman, distinguished by her sufferings and her patience; and the same circumstances produced a strong attachment on the part of Miss Seward. Of this interest and attachment, a proof was nearly made, of a kind so very remarkable, that I will tell it in Miss Seward's own words.

"One evening, after a long and intense reverie, he said, 'Lady Northesk, an art was practised in former years, which the medical world has very long disused; that of injecting blood into the veins by a syringe, and thus repairing the waste of diseases like yours. Human blood, and that of calves and sheep, were used promiscuously. Superstition attached impiety to the practice. It was put a stop to in England by a bull of excommunication from some of our Popish princes, against the practitioners of sanguinary injection. That it had been practised with success, we may, from this interdiction, fairly conclude, else restraint upon its continuance must have been superfluous. We have a very ingenious watch-maker

here, whom I think I could instruct to form a proper instrument for that purpose, if you chose to submit to the experiment.' She replied cheerfully, that she had not the least objection, if he thought it eligible.

"Miss Seward then said, 'If the trial should be determined upon, perhaps Lady Northesk would prefer a supply from a healthy human subject, rather than from an animal. My health is perfect, neither am I conscious of any lurking disease, hereditary or accidental. I have no dread of the lancet, and will gladly spare, from time to time, such a portion from my veins to Lady Northesk, as Dr. Darwin shall think proper to inject.'

"He seemed much pleased with the proposal, and his amiable patient expressed gratitude far above the just claim of the circumstance. Dr. Darwin said he would consult his pillow about it.

"The next day, when Miss Seward called upon Lady Northesk, the doctor took her previously into his study, telling her, that he had resigned all thoughts of trying the experiment upon Lady Northesk; that it had occurred to him as a last resource to save an excellent woman, whose disorder, he feared, was beyond the reach of medicine; 'but,' added he, 'the construction of a proper machine is so nice an affair, the least failure in its power of acting so hazardous, the chance, at least from the experiment, so precarious, that I do not choose to stake my reputation upon the risk. If she die, the world will say I killed Lady Northesk, though the London and Bath physicians have pronounced her case hopeless, and sent her home to expire. They have given her a great deal too much medicine. I shall give her very little. Their system of nutritious food, their gravy jellies, and strong wines, I have already changed for milk, vegetables, and fruit. No wines ever; no meat, no strong broth, at present. If this alteration of diet prove unavailing, her family and friends must lose her.'

"It was not unavailing; she gathered strength under the change from day to day. The disease abated, and in three weeks she pursued her journey to Scotland, a convalescent, full of hope for herself, of grateful veneration towards her physician, whose skill had saved her from the grave; and full also of over-rating thankfulness to Miss Seward for the offer she had made. With her Lady Northesk regularly corresponded, from that time till her sudden and deplorable death."[1]—*Memoirs of Dr. Darwin*, by Anna Seward. Lond. 1804, pp. 110-114.

In the year 1780, Mrs. Seward died, and the care of attending her surviving parent devolved entirely upon his daughter. This was soon embittered by a frequent recurrence of paralytic and apoplectic affections, which broke Mr. Seward's health, and gradually impaired the tone of his mind. His frame resisted these repeated assaults for ten years, during which Miss Seward had the melancholy satisfaction to see that, even when he had

[1] [This Countess of Northesk, a daughter of the Earl of Leven, died at Edinburgh in 1779, in consequence of her cap and handkerchief catching fire.]

lost consciousness of everything else, her father retained a sense of her constant and unremitting attentions. There is, in one of her poems, some verses expressive of his situation, while claiming for him a rank among the bards of her favourite city:

> " Source of my life, it will not prove
> A vain essay of filial love,
> Here, if a right thy daughter claim
> To rank with theirs thy honour'd name,
> Whose silver lyre's harmonious sound
> Made lovely Lichfield classic ground,
> Though now thy vital lamp's faint light
> Gleams on the verge of its long night,
> Dull, dim, and weak its social blaze,
> And pale its intellectual rays.
> While duteous love, with anxious aim,
> Guards from rude blasts its quivering flame,
> Through yet a few more quiet years,
> That bring to thee nor pains nor fears,
> O! be it mine to cheer and warm
> Thy drooping heart, thy helpless form! "

In 1790, this scene closed by the death of Mr. Seward. His daughter remained mistress of an easy and independent fortune, and continued to inhabit the Bishop's Palace at Lichfield, which had been long her father's residence, and was hers until her death.

While engaged in attendance upon her father, Miss Seward, besides other occasional pieces, published, in 1782, her poetical novel, entitled *Louisa*, which was favourably received, and passed rapidly through several editions. Other pieces, chiefly on occasional topics, fell from her pen; some of which found their way to the public, and others are now, for the first time, printed from manuscripts. The beauties of Llangollen Vale, with the talents, virtues, and accomplishments of the ladies who have so long honoured it with their residence, claimed and obtained commemoration. Its inmates were among those whom Miss Seward valued most highly, and the regard was reciprocal.

Without pausing to trace the progress of her less important works, it is proper to mention the collection of original sonnets published in 1799. They were intended to restore the strict rules of the legitimate sonnet, and contain some beautiful examples of that species of composition. Less praise is due to the translations from Horace, in the same publication, which, being rather paraphrases than translations, can hardly be expected to gratify those whose early admiration has been turned to the original.

In 1804, the death of Dr. Darwin, who had encouraged the

first notes of her lyre, and from whom, perhaps, it had borrowed some of its peculiar intonations, induced Miss Seward to give the public a biographical sketch of her early friend. Her *Life of Dr. Darwin* ought, however, rather to have been entitled, anecdotes of the early part of his life, and of the society of Lichfield, while it was the place of his residence. Although written upon a desultory plan, and in a style disfigured by the use of frequent inversions and compounded epithets, the memoir has preserved much curious and interesting literary anecdote. The history of Mr. Day is told with a liveliness which these defects have not obscured, and contains a useful lesson, though humbling to the pride of human wisdom, since no prejudices of bigotry, or of fashion, ever led a votary into so many absurdities as this gentleman successfully achieved, while professing to be guided only by the pure light of reason and philosophy.[1] In this publication, also, Miss Seward laid her claim to the first fifty

[1] ["Mr. Day was the author of the popular history of *Sandford and Merton*, and of some poetical pieces. Of persons not actually insane, Day seems to have been one of the most extravagant characters that England, fertile in oddities, has produced. His eccentricities (we use the mildest word) have been made known to the public by a lively account of him in Miss Seward's *Life of Dr. Darwin*. The chief distinction of his character seems to have been a mixture of 'mauvaise honte,' and savage pride. He neither would nor could act like other people. The accomplishments and manners which he did not possess and could not attain, he not only despised but proscribed; and in his indignation against modern female manners, his horror of modern female education, and a certain theory of non-resistance, and passive obedience, which he had laid down for the lady whom he was to honour with his hand, he took two girls out of the Foundling Hospital, intending to educate them as wives for *self* and *friend*, in blissful innocence and ignorance, a contempt of folly and finery, and an implicit submission to all his fancies. The one was called Sabrina, after the Severn, and Sidney, after Algernon Sidney; the other was called Lucretia—we forget what. This fine plan utterly failed, at least so far as regarded poor Mr. Day. Lucretia was turned off for stupidity; but she, it seems, married a decent tradesman, and had talents enough to make a good wife and mother. Sabrina was more docile and more handsome; and perhaps Mr. Day might have married her, but he took some disgust at the sleeves of a certain gown, which the young lady one day put on, and Sabrina subsequently married Mr. Bricknell, a lawyer, a friend of Day's, and who indeed, Miss Seward says, was a partner in the original venture. Mr. Edgeworth, however, asserts that Mr. Day took *both* the girls for his own use, in order to have a better chance of success; though he admits that he discarded all thoughts of marrying Sabrina, on account of some toilet error, which Mr. Edgeworth relates with a grave deference to his friend's crack-brained absurdities, very amusing and characteristic of both."—*Quarterly Review of Edgeworth's Memoirs*, July 1820.

After various acts of foible, eccentricity, and benevolence, Mr. Day took to one of his uncommon systems in experiment of training of the horse. Having reared a favourite foal, without the assistance of a horsebreaker, he mounted the animal, which, disliking this new kind of treatment, plunged, threw his master, who was not a good horseman, and, with his heels, struck him a blow on the head, which instantly proved fatal. 1789.]

verses in the Botanic Garden, which she had written in compliment to Dr. Darwin, and which he had inserted in his poem without any acknowledgment. The correctness of Miss Seward's statement is proved by the publication of the verses with her name, in some periodical publications, previous to the appearance of Dr. Darwin's poem; and the disingenuous suppression of the aid of which he availed himself must remain a considerable stain upon the character of the poet of Flora.

After the publication of the sonnets, Miss Seward did not undertake any large poem. Yet she continued to pour forth her poetical effusions upon such occasions as interested her feelings, or excited her imagination. These efforts were, however, unequal to those of her earlier muse. Age was now approaching with its usual attendants, declining health, and the loss of friends summoned from the stage before her. Yet her interest in literature and poetry continued unabated; and she maintained an unrelaxed correspondence, not only with her former friends, but with those later candidates for poetical distinction whose exertions she approved of. Among these, she distinguished with her highest regard Mr. Robert Southey, and used to mention, as the most decided symptom of degenerate taste, the inadequate success of his sublime epic, *Madoc*. On this subject she used to quote, as a parallel instance of rash judgment, a passage from Waller's Letters:—"The old blind schoolmaster, John Milton, hath published a tedious poem on the Fall of Man;—if its length be not considered as merit, it has no other."

In summer 1807, the Editor, upon his return from London, visited Miss Seward, with whom he had corresponded occasionally for some years. Robertson observes that, in a female reign, the queen's personal charms are a subject of importance; and, as the same rule may apply to the case of a female author, this may be no improper place to mention the impression which her appearance and conversation were calculated to make upon a stranger. They were, indeed, well worth a longer pilgrimage. Miss Seward, when young, must have been exquisitely beautiful; for, in advanced age, the regularity of her features, the fire and expression of her countenance, gave her the appearance of beauty, and almost of youth. Her eyes were auburn, of the precise shade and hue of her hair, and possessed great power. In reciting, or in speaking with animation, they appeared to become darker; and, as it were, to flash fire. I should have hesitated to state the impression which this peculiarity made

upon me at the time, had not my observation been confirmed by that of the first actress of this or any other age, with whom I lately happened to converse on our deceased friend's expressive powers of countenance. Miss Seward's tone of voice was melodious, guided by excellent taste, and well suited to reading and recitation, in which she willingly exercised it. She did not sing, nor was she a great proficient in music, though very fond of it, having studied it later in life than is now usual. Her stature was tall, and her form was originally elegant; but having broken the *patella* of the knee by a fall in the year 1768, she walked with pain and difficulty, which increased with the pressure of years.

The great command of literary anecdote which Miss Seward possessed, her ready perception both of the serious and ludicrous, and her just observation and original taste, rendered her society delightful. She entered into every topic with the keenness and vivacity of youth, and it was difficult to associate the idea of advanced years either with her countenance or conversation. The possessor of such quick feelings seldom escapes the portion of pain with which all earthly good is alloyed and tempered. With the warmest heart for her friends, and an unbounded enthusiasm in their service, Miss Seward united a sensibility to coldness, or to injuries real or supposed, which she permitted to disturb her more than was consistent with prudence or with happiness. The same tone of mind rendered her jealous of critical authority, when exercised over her own productions, or those of her friends. Her prepossessions upon literary points were also very strong. She admired the lofty and energetic tone of Milton; and the passages of Shakspeare to which she gave the preference were those which partook of the same character. But although she admitted the superiority of those masters of the lyre, her taste for ornament exceeded the simplicity of their models, and was chiefly gratified, in modern poetry at least, by a more laboured and ornate style of composition. For Darwin, her early friend, and perhaps her preceptor in the art of poetry, she claimed a higher rank among the poets of Britain than the judges of literature are at present inclined to allow him. There is a fashion in poetry, which, without increasing or diminishing the real value of the materials moulded upon it, does wonders in facilitating its currency, while it has novelty, and is often found to impede its reception when the mode has passed away. It is with such verses as with the ancient defensive armour:

———The fashion of the fight
Has thrown its gilt, and gaudy plumes aside,
For modern fopperies.

Miss Seward was in practice trained and attached to that school of picturesque and florid description, of lofty metaphor and bold personification, of a diction which inversion and the use of compound epithets rendered as remote as possible from the tone of ordinary language, which was introduced, or at least rendered fashionable, by Darwin, but which was too remote from common life, and natural expression, to retain its popularity. Yet her taste, though perhaps over-dazzled by the splendour which she adopted in her own compositions, readily admitted the claims of Pope, Collins, Gray, Mason, and of all those bards who have condescended to add the graces of style and expression to poetical thought and imagery. But she particularly demanded beauty, elegance, or splendour of language; and was unwilling to allow that sublimity or truth of conception could atone for poverty, rudeness, or even simplicity of expression. To Spenser, and the poets of his school, she lent a very unwilling ear; and—what will, perhaps, best explain my meaning—she greatly preferred the flowing numbers and expanded descriptions of Pope's *Iliad* to Cowper's translation, which approaches nearer to the simple dignity of Homer. These peculiarities of taste Miss Seward was always ready to defend; nor was it easy for the professors of an opposite faith to sustain either the art of her arguments, or the authorities which her extensive acquaintance with the best British classics readily supplied. She has left, among other manuscripts, a Defence of Pope's Odyssey against Spence, in which she displays much critical acumen, and has decidedly the better of the professor. I ought, however, to add, that two circumstances qualified Miss Seward's taste for the picturesque. When she wrote upon subjects in which her feelings were deeply interested, she forgot the "tiara and glittering zone" of the priestess of Apollo, in the more natural effusions of real passion. The song which begins,

"To thy rocks, stormy Lannow, adieu,"

seems to have been composed under such influence. The partiality with which Miss Seward regarded the poetical attempts of her friends, formed another class of exceptions to her peculiar taste for the magnificent in poetry. She found, with an ingenuity which the subject sometimes rendered wonderful, reasons for liking what her prejudices in favour of the author had pre-

viously determined her to admire. Her literary enthusiasm, ardent as it was, became in such cases tempered and qualified by the yet keener interest she felt in those friends whom she valued; and, if this caused an occasional anomaly in her critical system, those who have experienced its benefit may be pardoned for quoting it as an illustration of the kindly warmth of her heart.

That warmth was not alone displayed in regard for friends in the same rank of life, and cultivating similar studies. Her benevolence was universally felt among those to whom it afforded active and important support, as well as those whose pursuits it aided, and whose feelings it gratified. But it is not the purpose of this slight sketch either to enter into the merits of Miss Seward's poetry, or to descend minutely into her personal character. The reader has, in these volumes, enough for forming an opinion upon the first point, and many passages from which he may ground his own authentic conclusions concerning the energy of the talents and worth of the heart by which they were dictated. I return to the narrative, which these cursory observations have interrupted.

For a year or two preceding 1807, Miss Seward had been occasionally engaged in arranging and preparing for the press the edition of her poems which is now given to the public. She had reconsidered them individually, and made such additions and corrections as she conceived necessary. This subject was repeatedly mentioned in her correspondence, and the publication would have taken place during Miss Seward's lifetime if some difficulties had not occurred to delay it. These were in the course of being removed; and it is probable the volumes would soon have gone to the press, had the state of Miss Seward's health permitted her to superintend their progress. But her constitution, infirm for several years, was now rapidly declining. In harvest 1807, she was assailed by a scorbutic disorder, which affected her blood and whole system in a degree most painfully irritating, banishing sleep, and rendering waking hours almost intolerable. Her spirit continued, however, to struggle against its assaults, and she entered, by advice of her physicians, upon a course of alterative medicine, which, it was supposed, might alleviate or remove her complaint. But the disorder proved invincible; and in March, 1809, the Editor had the pain of receiving the last farewell of his honoured friend. It was written at intervals, and the handwriting gradually degenerates from the distinct and beautiful manuscript which Miss Seward used

to write, into a scrawl, so feebly traced, as to be nearly illegible.

"You may believe, dear and admired friend, it was no trivial cause, no idle procrastination, that kept me silent four months and a week to a letter of yours, the humour, wit, and kindness of which recompensed its delay. Early in our late Siberian December, I was proposing to address you, when a violent fever, with alarming hemorrhage, seized my weak frame. During five nights and days, it put my life into peril. In all that time, I was unable to swallow the least atom of solids, whilst my thirst was raging and unquenchable. On the 6th day, the fever abated, and some degree of appetite returned; but the disease has shook my weak frame to its foundation. The fever abated, but is not yet subdued. Sometimes I have a few hours intermission, but my pulse remaining at 90—and 60 is my pulse of health—the medical people will not consent to my taking the bark. Much writing is forbid me; indeed, its effect is sufficiently forewarning, since, the moment I begin to think intensely, the pen falls from my hand, a lethargic sensation creeps over me, and I doze. Not more than by a page a-day shall I attempt to proceed with this snail of an epistle. I had two reasons for wishing to have written to you sooner; gratitude, and the desire of presenting you with one of the three copies which my poetic friend, Mr. Mundy, has sent me to present to three chosen friends. Though printed, it is not published, and consequently unpurchasable."

"*Monday, 13th of March.*

"So far was written Monday the 6th of this month, when again the lethargy crept on. I fell asleep, and awoke in a raging fever and high delirium. Next day, after a dreadful night, the physician ordered me to lose six ounces of blood, and that not in the slightest degree abating the fever, he took six ounces more on the eve, and all without effect. I feel all the props of my life giving way; and probably this is the last time I shall ever write anything in the shape of a letter; but I have procured a frank, and am unwilling it should be useless. It is for Thursday next. Considering my pains, my raging thirst, my utter debility, it would be a mercy if I should not be in existence on that day.

"If I knew where to find you, I would send the copy of Mundy's Poems, but I am loath to put you to the expense of its carriage, except I should send it to you in London. I am not able to add more than what I think will be my last benediction on you and yours. O! what a blessing is a sudden death! I always prayed for it, but am not worthy to have my prayer granted.

"I thank you for all your kindness, and for the delightful hours your talents have given me.

"Affectionately your friend,
"A. Seward."

"It is Thursday, and each intervening day since I closed my letter has taken large death-strides upon me."

This melancholy letter was too true an augury of the event which it anticipated. Upon Thursday the 23rd of March, 1809, Miss Seward was seized with a universal stupor, which continued until the 25th, at six o'clock in the evening, when she expired. Her friends, a term which comprehends many names distinguished in British literature, must long lament this accomplished woman. The poems in which she survives to the public, although containing vivid traces of genius, will serve but to remind those who were honoured with her acquaintance of the loss which they have sustained, of her ardent love of literature, her disinterested and candid defence of its best interests, of the amiable and enthusiastic warmth of her friendship, and the innate benevolence of her heart.

The arrangement of Miss Seward's fortune was left under the charge of her residuary legatee, Thomas White, Esq., residing in the Close of Lichfield, and Charles Simpson, Esq., of the same city; the former connected with her by relationship, and both still more by kindness and intimacy. To the present Editor she bequeathed her literary performances, and particularly the works she had so long intended for the press, with the instructions, as well as under the exception, contained in the following posthumous letter:—

"DEAR SIR,

"In my last and lately-executed will, I have bequeathed to you the exclusive copyright of those compositions in verse and prose which I mean shall constitute a miscellaneous edition of my works. This bequest consists of my writings in verse which have passed the press, together with those that are yet unpublished; also a collection of juvenile letters, from the year 1762 to June 1768, together with four sermons, and a critical dissertation.

"The verse consists of two half-bound volumes quarto, full of manuscript composition; and, at this time, of six manuscript books, sewn together in the form of quarto volumes. With these I desire may be blended my poems which have already been regularly and separately published, printed copies of which will be found tied up with the manuscript verse, and from those printed copies I desire the press for this edition may be struck. Some slight alterations in the printed copies are inserted in my own handwriting, to which I request you will have the goodness to attend in your survey of the proof sheets. I wish the printed and manuscript poems may succeed each other in the miscellany according to the successive periods at which they were written; to which end there are specified directions to the printer through their whole course. With these you will find, and to these I desire may succeed, in the Miscellany, the three first books of an epic poem, raised on the basis of Fénélon's *Telemachus*, but in very excursive paraphrase, harmonising, as I flattered myself, with the style of Pope's Homer. I once hoped

to have completed the poem, and that, in such a completion, it might have formed no unacceptable conclusion to the adventures of the young and royal hero, left unfinished in the *Odyssey*. More indispensable claims upon my attention frustrated that purpose. Abortive as it proved, those of my classical friends who have examined the three books, assure me that their contents are, poetically, equal to anything I have written.

" With the above-named compositions, you will meet with a little collection of my late dear father's poetry, with references to more of it published anonymously in *Dodsley's Miscellany*. I wish you to admit this collection, together with his poems in Dodsley, into the edition I have bequeathed to you, and that it may succeed to my own poems.

" To these metrical volumes I wish the juvenile letters may be added, succeeding the poetic volumes, as in Warburton's edition of Pope's works. I refer the critical dissertation, defending Pope's *Odyssey* against the erroneous criticisms of Spence, to your judgment, that, when you have read the tract, you may publish or suppress it, as you think best. If the former be your choice, it should follow the juvenile letters, being, as it was, the production of my youthful years. Last, the four sermons, unless you think it better to publish them by themselves at a different period, rather than that they should form a part of this collective edition. I wish it to be printed in small octavo.

" Twelve quarto and manuscript volumes of my letters, from the year 1784 to the present day, I have bequeathed to Mr. A. Constable. They are copies of such letters, or parts of letters, as, after they were written, appeared to me worth the attention of the public. Large as the collection is, it does not include a twelfth part of the letters I have written from the said period.[1]

" To Mr. Constable, rather than to yourself, have they been bequeathed, on account of the political principles which, during many past years, they breathed. Fervent, indeed, and uniform, was my abhorrence of the dreadful system in our cabinet, which has reduced the continent to utter vassalage, and endangered the independence of Great Britain. Yet I know these opinions are too hostile to your friendships and connections with the belligerent party, for the possibility of it being agreeable to you to become the editor of those twelve epistolary volumes.

" I shall address a posthumous letter to Mr. Constable on their subject, expressing my desire that he publish two volumes annually, not classing them to separate correspondents, but allowing them to succeed each other in the order of time as they stand in the collection.

" This letter has been written beneath the pressure of much pain and illness. I am in a state which induces me to believe you will, ere long, receive this testimony of my regard, confidence, and gratitude, for all the attention with which you have honoured me; above all, for your kind visit. May health and length of days be

[1] I owe Mr. Constable my thanks for having offered me the unlimited use of this collection, for drawing up the present Memoir. The bounds I had prescribed to myself do not admit of my profiting to a great extent by his liberality.

yours, with leisure to employ, from time to time, your illustrious muse. And now, dear sir, a long, a last adieu!

"ANNA SEWARD."

I have, in every material respect, punctually complied with the wishes of my deceased friend. I have exercised the latitude indulged to me of omitting the prose compositions, and also the poems of the late Mr. Seward, as it was judged advisable to limit the size of this publication to three volumes. The imitation of Telemachus is also omitted; and, in publishing the correspondence, everything is retrenched which has reference to personal anecdote. I am aware that, in this particular, I have not consulted the taste of the age; but, in my opinion, nothing less important than the ascertainment of historical fact justifies withdrawing the veil from the incidents of private life. I would not willingly have this suppression misconstrued. There is not a line in my possession but might be published with honour to her who bequeathed me the manuscripts, and with justice to those named in them; and those in Mr. Constable's possession, being more generally of a literary nature, are still less liable to exception. But few can remember the feelings, passions, and prejudices of their earlier career, without feeling reluctance to their being brought before the public; and, in some late instances, the parties concerned might have remonstrated with the editor like the dethroned monarch with his insulting accuser:

> ——————"And must I ravel out
> My weaved-up-follies . . .
> If thy offences were upon record,
> Would it not shame thee in so fair a troop,
> To read a lecture of them?"

The poetry has been published precisely according to Miss Seward's directions. To the numerous friends of Miss Seward, these volumes will form an acceptable present; for, besides their poetical merit, they form a pleasing register of her sentiments, her feelings, and her affections. The general reception they may meet with is more dubious, since collections of occasional and detached poems have rarely been honoured with a large share of public favour. Should Miss Seward's poetry be admitted as an exception, it will add much to the satisfaction which I feel in the faithful discharge of the task intrusted to me by the bequest of the amiable and highly accomplished author.

DANIEL DE FOE

[This Biographical Sketch was not written by the author of this volume, but by the late Mr. John Ballantyne, bookseller in Edinburgh; whose wit, lively talents, and kindness of disposition, will make him long regretted and remembered by his friends.]

PERHAPS there exists no work, either of instruction or entertainment, in the English language, which has been more generally read, and more universally admired, than the *Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*. It is difficult to say in what the charm consists, by which persons of all classes and denominations are thus fascinated; yet the majority of readers will recollect it as among the first works which awakened and interested their youthful attention; and feel, even in advanced life, and in the maturity of their understanding, that there are still associated with Robinson Crusoe, the sentiments peculiar to that period, when all is new, all glittering in prospect, and when those visions are most bright, which the experience of after life tends only to darken and destroy.

This work was first published in April, 1719; its reception, as may be supposed, was universal. It is a singular circumstance that the author (the subject of our present Memoir), after a life spent in political turmoil, danger, and imprisonment, should have occupied himself, in its decline, in the production of a work like the present; unless it may be supposed that his wearied heart turned with disgust from society and its institutions, and found solace in picturing the happiness of a state such as he has assigned to his hero. Be this as it may, society is for ever indebted to the memory of De Foe for his production of a work, in which the ways of Providence are simply and pleasingly vindicated, and a lasting and useful moral is conveyed through the channel of an interesting and delightful story.

Daniel de Foe was born in London in the year 1661. His father was James Foe, of the parish of St. Giles', butcher. Much curious speculation, with which we shall not trouble our readers, has arisen from the circumstance of Daniel's having, in his own instance, prefixed the *De* to the family name. We are inclined to adopt the opinion of that critical enquirer, who supposes that Daniel did so, being ashamed of the lowness of

his origin, and conceived the prefixed *De* had a sound of Norman dignity with it. His family as well as himself were Dissenters; but it does not appear that his tenets were so strict as his sect required; for he complains, in the Preface to his *More Reformation*, that some Dissenters had reproached him, as if he had said, that "the gallows and the galleys ought to be the penalty of going to the conventicle; forgetting, that I must design *to have my father, my wife, six innocent children, and myself*, put into the same condition."

De Foe's education was rather circumscribed, which is the more to be lamented, as, in so many instances, he has exhibited proofs of rare natural genius. He was sent by his father, at twelve years old, to the Newington Green Dissenting Academy, then kept by Mr. Morton, where he remained about four years; and this appears to have been all the education he ever received.[1] When he was remanded from school, it would seem that, his genius not lying towards the marrow-bone and cleaver, his father had put him to some other trade, of what nature we are unable to learn, De Foe himself being very reserved on the subject. When charged by Tutchin [2] with having his breeding as an apprentice to a hosier, he asserts (May 1705) "that he never was a hosier, or an apprentice, but admits that he had been a trader." [3]

This, however, had occupied but a short period of his youth, for in 1685, when he was in his twenty-fourth year, he took up arms in the cause of the Duke of Monmouth. On the destruction of Monmouth's party, Daniel had the good fortune to escape unpunished amidst the herd of greater delinquents; but, in his

[1] [Mr. Wilson, the industrious author of *The Life and Times of De Foe*, London, 3 vols. 8vo, 1830, says (vol. i. p. 27), "Of De Foe's attainments at the academy, it is impossible now to speak with any certainty, but some light may be thrown upon the subject by his own confessions, as they are scattered in his writings. He tells us in one of his 'Reviews,' that he had been master of five languages, and that he had studied the mathematics, natural philosophy, logic, geography, and history. With the theory and practice of our constitution he was also well acquainted, and he studied politics as a science. Under the direction of his tutor, he went through a complete course of theology, in which he acquired a proficiency, that enabled him to cope with the most acute writers of that disputatious age."]

[2] Tutchin, the publisher of the *Observator*, and a steady opponent of De Foe, both in politics and literature.

[3] Perhaps the salve he laid to his conscience for this apparently false assertion was that, though he *dealt* in hose, he did not *make* them. [There is reason to believe that De Foe had been originally designed for the ministry among the Presbyterian dissenters. See his *Review*, vi., p. 341. He says, "It is not often that I trouble you with any of my divinity; the pulpit is none of my office. It was my disaster first to be set apart for, and then to be set apart from, the honour of that sacred employ."]

latter years, when the avowal was no longer dangerous, he boasts himself much of his exploits, in *His Appeal to Honour and Justice, being a true Account of his Conduct in Public Affairs.*

Three years afterwards (1688), De Foe was admitted a Liveryman of London. As he had been throughout a steady advocate for the Revolution, he had now the satisfaction of witnessing that great event. Oldmixon says (*Works*, vol. ii., p. 276), that at a feast, given by the Lord Mayor of London to King William, on the 29th October, 1689, De Foe appeared gallantly mounted, and richly accoutred, among the troopers commanded by Lord Peterborough, who attended the king and queen from Whitehall to the Mansion House. All Daniel's horsemanship, however, united to the steady devotion of his pen to the cause of William, were unable to procure him the notice of that cold-charactered monarch; and our author was fain to content himself (as his adversary Tutchin asserts) with the humble occupation of a hosier in Freeman's Yard, Cornhill; wisely considering that, if the court could do without political tracts, the people could not do without stockings.[1]

With the ill fortune, however, attendant upon those men of genius, who cultivated their superior powers to the neglect of that common sense which is requisite to carry a man creditably through this everyday world, De Foe's affairs declined from bad to worse; he spent those hours, which he ought to have devoted to his shop, in a *society for the cultivation of polite learning*, and he was under the necessity of absconding from his creditors in 1692. One of those creditors, who had less consideration for polite learning, and more irritability than the rest, took out a commission of bankruptcy against him; but, fortunately for our author, this was superseded on the petition of those to whom he was most indebted, and a composition was accepted. This composition he punctually paid by efforts of unwearied diligence; and some of the creditors, whose claims had been thus satisfied, falling into distress themselves, he waited upon them, and paid their debts in full. He was next engaged in carrying on tile-works, on the banks of the Thames, near Tilbury, but with little success; for it was sarcastically said of him that he did not, "like the Egyptians, require bricks without straw, but, like the Jews, required bricks without paying his

[1] [From Wilson's *Life and Times of De Foe*, it fully appears that he had dealt largely in the *wool trade*, and made at least one voyage to Spain on his own account.]

labourers." [1] United to his tile-making, our author, stimulated by an active mind and embarrassed circumstances, devised many other schemes, or, as he called them, projects. He wrote many sheets about the English coin; he projected banks for every county, and factories for goods; he exhibited a proposal (very feelingly, no doubt) for a commission of enquiry into bankrupts' estates; he contrived a pension-office for the relief of the poor, and finished by publishing a long essay upon projects themselves.

About this period (1695), our author's indefatigable endeavours procured him some notice from the court, and he was appointed accountant to the commissioners for managing the duties on glass. Here also his usual ill luck attended him; he was thrown out of his situation by the suppression of the tax in 1699.

But the time at length arrived when the sun of royal favour was to shine out upon our author's prospects. About the end of 1699, there was published what De Foe calls, "an horrid pamphlet, in very ill verse, written by one Tutchin, and called *The Foreigners:* in which the author fell personally upon the king, then upon the Dutch nation, and, after having reproached his majesty with crimes that his worst enemies could not think of without horror, he sums up all in the odious name of *Foreigner*. This filled me with rage against the book, and gave birth to a trifle, which I never could hope should have met with so general an acceptation."

The trifle, which De Foe here alludes to, was his *True-born Englishman*—a poetical satire on the *Foreigners*, and a defence of King William and the Dutch—of which the sale was great without example, and our author's reward proportionate. He was even admitted to the honour of a personal interview with the king, and became with more ardour than ever a professed partisan of the court. In this composition the satire was strong, powerful, and manly, upbraiding the English Tories for their unreasonable prejudice against foreigners; the rather that there were so many nations blended in the mass now called Englishmen. The verse was rough and mistuned, for De Foe never seems to have possessed an ear for the melody of language, whether in prose or verse. But though wanting the long resounding verse and energy divine of Dryden, he had often masculine

[1] [This is the mere effusion of partisan spleen. De Foe's effort to establish the manufacture of pantiles, hitherto imported from Holland, was a laudable one; and there is not the slightest evidence that he ever dealt unfairly by his labourers. After several years the works at Tilbury were discontinued in consequence of the distress De Foe fell into through a government prosecution for libel. See Wilson, vol. i., p. 228.]

expressions and happy turns of thought, not unworthy of the author of *Absalom* and *Achitophel*, though, upon the whole, his style seems rather to have been formed on that of Hall, Oldham, and the elder satirists. The first verses are well known:—

> " Wherever God erects a House of prayer,
> The Devil always builds a chapel there;
> And 'twill be found upon examination,
> The latter has the largest congregation."

The author's first publication after *The True-born Englishman* was, *The original Power of the Collective Body of the People of England examined and asserted;* next, *An Argument to prove that a standing Army, with consent of Parliament, was not inconsistent with a free Government;* but, as we do not mean to follow De Foe through the career of his politics, and intend only to notice such works as, in their consequences, materially affected his personal situation and affairs, we shall pass to the death of his sovereign and patron, which took place 8th March, 1702.

The accession of Anne having restored the line of Stuart, to whom the politics and conduct of De Foe had been peculiarly obnoxious, our author was shortly reduced, as before, to live on the produce of his wits; and it is perhaps lucky for the world that there is so much truth in the universal outcry against the neglect of living authors; for there seems a certain laziness concomitant with genius, which can only be incited to action by the pressure of necessity. Had William lived, probably the world would never have been delighted with the *Adventures of Robinson Crusoe.*

Whether De Foe found politics the most vendible produce of the press, or, like Macbeth, felt himself—

> " Stept in so far, that should he wade no more,
> Returning were as tedious as go o'er,"—

we are yet to learn; but he ventured to reprint his *Shortest Way with the Dissenters;* and to publish several other treatises, which were considered libellous by the Commons; and on the 25th of February, 1702-3, a complaint being made in the House, of a book entitled, *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters;* and the folios 11-18 and 26, being read, the House " Resolved, that this book, being full of false and scandalous reflections on this Parliament, and tending to promote sedition, be burnt by the hands of the common hangman, in New Palace Yard."

Our unfortunate author's political sins were now all mustered

in array against him, and a tremendous catalogue they made. He had been the favourite and panegyrist of William; he had fought for Monmouth, and opposed James; he had vindicated the Revolution, and defended the rights of the people; he had bantered, insulted, and offended the whole Tory leaders of the Commons, and, after all, he could not be quiet, but must republish his most offensive productions.

Thus overpowered, De Foe was obliged to secrete himself; and we are indebted to a very disagreeable circumstance for the following accurate description of his person. A proclamation was issued by the Secretaries of State, in January, 1703, in the following terms:

"St. James's, *Jan.* 10, 1702-3.

"Whereas Daniel De Foe, *alias* De Fooe, is charged with writing a scandalous and seditious pamphlet, entitled, *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters;* he is a middle-sized spare man, about forty years old, of a brown complexion, and dark-brown coloured hair, but wears a wig, a hooked nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth; was born in London, and for many years was a hose-factor, in Freeman's Yard, in Cornhill, and now is owner of the brick and pantile works near Tilbury Fort, in Essex; whoever shall discover the said Daniel De Foe to one of her majesty's principal Secretaries of State, or any of her majesty's justices of peace, so as he may be apprehended, shall have a reward of £50, which her majesty has ordered immediately to be paid upon such discovery."

He was shortly after caught, fined, pilloried, and imprisoned. "Thus," says he, "was I a second time ruined; for by this affair I lost above £3500 sterling." [1]

While he was confined in Newgate, he occupied his time in correcting for the press a collection of his own writings, which

[1] [It seems extremely difficult to believe that any person could ever have misunderstood De Foe's meaning and purpose of this *Short Method*. A single extract will show that he adopted a style of *irony*, hardly less broad than that of Swift in the Essay on the propriety of keeping down population by eating young children. He says, "'Tis vain to trifle in this matter. The light foolish handling of them by fines, is their glory and advantage. If the gallows instead of the compter, and the galleys instead of the fines, were the reward of going to a conventicle, there would not be so many sufferers. The spirit of martyrdom is over. They that will go to church to be chosen sheriffs and mayors, would go to forty churches rather than be hanged. If one severe law was made and punctually executed, that whoever was found at a conventicle should be banished the nation, and the preacher be hanged, we should soon see an end of the tale; they would all come to church; and one age would make us all one again."]

was published in the course of the year; and he even amused himself by writing an *Ode to the Pillory:* of which he had so lately been made the unwilling acquaintance. Hence Pope's insulting verse, which classes De Foe with his Tory rival:

> "Earless on high stood unbash'd De Foe,
> And Tutchin flagrant from the scenes below."

His *Hymn to the Pillory*, in rough and harsh iambics, has, like the *True-born Englishman*, and indeed all De Foe's poetry, a strong fund of manly satire, and we are mistaken if, in the lines which follow, the author does not successfully retort upon his prosecutors the shame at least of the punishment to which he had been subjected. They are in the spirit, though without the eloquence, of the gallant old cavalier, Lovelace.

> "Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage;
> Minds innocent and quiet take
> That for a hermitage."

The hymn of De Foe commences thus:

> "Hail! Hi'roglyphick State Machine,
> Condemn'd to punish fancy in;
> Men, that *are* men, can in thee feel no pain,
> And all thy insignificance disdain.
> Contempt, that false new word for shame,
> Is without crime an empty name—
> A shadow to amuse mankind,
> But never frights the wise or well-fix'd mind;
> Virtue despises human scorn,
> And scandals innocence adorn.
> Exalted on thy stool of state,
> What prospect do I see of future fate?
> How the inscrutables of providence
> Differ from our contracted sense;
> Hereby the errors of the town,
> That fools look out, and knaves look on."

Not satisfied with this unpleasant subject for iambics, De Foe afterwards wrote a *Hymn to the Gallows*.

But the chief object to which the author directed his mind was the projection of *The Review*. The publication of this periodical work commenced in 4to, on the 19th February, 1704, and continued, at the rate of two numbers a-week, till March, 1705, when an additional weekly number was published, and it was continued every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, till May, 1713, forming in whole nine thick volumes. De Foe was the sole writer. This work treats of foreign and domestic intel-

ligence, politics, and trade; but as our author foresaw that it was not likely to become popular unless amusing, he discusses various other topics, under the head of a *Scandal Club;* Love, Marriage, Poetry, Language, and the prevailing tastes and habits of the times. Neither did these occupations find sufficient employment for his active mind. While he was still in Newgate (1704), he published *The Storm;* or a collection of the most remarkable casualties which happened in the tempest, 26th November, 1703. Nor was this work a dry detail of disasters only, De Foe having taken the occasion, with his usual felicity, to inculcate the truths of religion, and the superintendency of Providence.[1]

About the end of 1704, when, as our author tells us, he lay ruined and friendless in Newgate, without hopes of deliverance, Sir Robert Harley, then Secretary of State, of whom De Foe had no previous personal knowledge, sent a verbal message to him, desiring to know "what he could do for him." Our author, no doubt, made a suitable reply; in consequence of which, Sir Robert took an opportunity to represent to the queen his present misery and unmerited sufferings. Anne, however, did not immediately consent to his liberation, but she enquired into the circumstances of his family, and sent, by Lord Godolphin, a considerable sum to his wife. She afterwards, through the same medium, conveyed a sum to himself, equal to the payment of his fine and discharge, and thus bound him eternally to her interest. He was liberated from Newgate the end of 1704, and retired immediately to his family at St. Edmund's Bury. He was not allowed, however, to enjoy the quiet he courted. Booksellers,

[1] The following account of this tremendous visitation is extracted from the records of the period.

"November 26. About midnight began the most terrible storm that had been known in England; the wind W.S.W. attended with flashes of lightning. It uncovered the roofs of many houses and churches, blew down the spires of several steeples and chimneys, tore whole groves of trees up by the roots. The leads of some churches were rolled up like scrolls of parchment, and several vessels, boats, and barges, were sunk in the river of Thames; but the royal navy sustained the greatest damage, being just returned from the Straits; four third-rates, one second-rate, four fourth-rates, and many others of less force, were cast away upon the coast of England, and above fifteen hundred seamen lost, besides those that were cast away in merchant ships. The loss that London alone sustained was computed at one million sterling, and the city of Bristol lost to the amount of two hundred thousand pounds. Among the persons who were drowned was Rear-Admiral Beaumont.

"Upon this calamity the Commons addressed her Majesty, that she would give directions for rebuilding and repairing the royal navy; and that she would make some provision for the families of those seamen that perished in the storm, with which her Majesty complied."

news-writers, and wits, circulated everywhere reports that he had fled from justice, and deserted his security. He despised their spite, and resumed his labours; the first fruits of which were, a *Hymn to Victory*, and a *Double Welcome to the Duke of Marlborough;* the subjects for both of which were furnished by the glorious achievements of that general.

Our author now continued his *Review*, and his political pamphleteering, for several years; in the course of which he was subjected to much disquiet, and frequently to danger; but the consciousness of his situation as an English freeholder, and a livery-man of London, united to a considerable degree of resolution and personal courage, enabled him to encounter and overcome the machinations of his enemies. It will scarcely be believed, at this time of day, that, on a journey which his affairs led him to take to the western parts of England, a project was formed to kidnap and send him as a soldier to the army; that the western justices, in the ardour of their party zeal, determined to apprehend him as a vagabond; and that suits were commenced against him in his absence for fictitious debts: yet all these circumstances De Foe has asserted in his *Review;* and we have not learnt that any attempt was ever made to controvert the truth of his statements.

About this time (1706) a situation occurred for which our author's abilities were peculiarly fitted. The cabinet of Queen Anne was in want of a person of general commercial knowledge, ready talents, and insinuating manners, to go to Scotland for the purpose of promoting the great measure of the union. Lord Godolphin determined to employ De Foe; he accordingly carried him to the queen, by whom our author was graciously received, and in a few days he was sent to Edinburgh. The particular nature of his instructions has never been made public; but on his arrival at Edinburgh, in October, 1706, De Foe was recognised as a character almost diplomatic. We must refer our readers to his *History of the Union*, for the various and interesting particulars of this mission; the detail of which, here, would occupy an extent beyond the limits of our biography.

De Foe appears to have been no great favourite in Scotland, although, while there, he published *Caledonia*, a poem in honour of the nation. He mentions many hair-breadth 'scapes, which, by "his own prudence, and God's providence," he effected; and it is not wonderful that, where almost the whole nation was decidedly averse to the union, a character like De Foe, sent thither to promote it by all means, direct and indirect, should

be regarded with dislike, and even exposed to the danger of assassination. The act for the union was passed by the Scotch parliament in January, and De Foe returned to London in February, 1707, to write a history of that great international treaty. It is believed that his services were rewarded by a pension from Queen Anne.

During the troublous period which followed, until the conclusion of the war by the treaty of Utrecht, De Foe, wiser by experience, lived quietly at Newington, publishing his *Review*. He encountered, however, in the fulfilment of this task, much contentious opposition and obloquy, which he manfully resisted and retorted; but, after the political changes, by which his first patron Sir Robert Harley, and next Lord Godolphin, were turned out of power, his pecuniary allowance from the Treasury seems to have ceased, and he was compelled, as before, to launch out as a general writer for the supply of his necessities. The political agitation of the times dictated his subjects; but, unfortunately for De Foe, both Tories and Jacobites, in those days, were such plain matter-of-fact men, that his raillery was misunderstood, and he was arrested, and committed to his old habitation, for several squibs, which were obviously ironical.

The writings on which he was indicted, were two; *What if the Pretender should come?* and, *What if the Queen should die?* "Nothing," says De Foe, "could be more plain than that the titles of these are amusements, in order to get the books into the hands of those who had been deluded by the Jacobites." His explanation would not suffice; he was tried and found guilty, fined in £800, and committed to Newgate. He was now compelled to drop the publication of his *Review;* and it is singular that he did so while confined in Newgate, the very place in which its idea had first entered his head nine years before.

After lying in jail a few months, he was liberated by the queen's order in November, 1713.

Although thus released, and the innocence of his intentions admitted, if not established, nothing was done for him; and the queen's death, which took place shortly after (in July, 1714), left him defenceless to the attacks of his rancorous enemies. "No sooner," says he, "was the queen dead, and the king, as right required, proclaimed, but the rage of men increased upon me to that degree that their threats were such as I am unable to express; and though I have written nothing since the queen's death, yet a great many things are called by my name, and I bear the answerer's insults." This was the darkest period of

our author's life. He had lost his appointment, whatever it was; he had been obliged to give up his *Review;* everything he ventured to publish besides was received with suspicion, and he was on all hands overborne by faction, injury, and insult. His health declined fast under these unmerited sufferings, but the vigour of his mind remained; and he determined to assert the innocence of his conduct, and to clear his blemished fame. He accordingly published, in 1715, *An Appeal to Honour and Justice, though it be of his worst Enemies, being a True Account of his Conduct in Public Affairs.* This work contains a long account and defence of his political conduct from the outset, and a most affecting detail of his sufferings; but the subject had been too much for him. When he reviewed what he had done, and how he had been rewarded; how much he had deserved, and how heavily he had suffered; the ardent spirit of De Foe sunk before the picture, and he was struck with apoplexy before he could finish his work. It was published, nevertheless, by his friends, and the profits of its sale seem to have been the only source of his support. This was the terminating period of our author's political career. He recovered his health, but his mind had changed its tone; and it was now that the history of Selkirk first suggested to him the idea of *Robinson Crusoe.* It has been thought by some to detract from the merit of De Foe that the idea was not originally his own: but really the story of Selkirk, which had been published a few years before in *Woodes Rogers' Voyage round the World,* appears to have furnished our author with so little beyond the bare idea of a man living upon an uninhabited island that it seems quite immaterial whether he took his hint from that, or from any other similar story, of which many were then current. In order to enable our readers to judge how very little De Foe has been assisted by Selkirk's narrative, we have extracted the whole from *Woodes Rogers' Voyage* and subjoined it to this article.[1]

The sale of *Robinson Crusoe* was, as we have already stated, rapid and extensive, and De Foe's profits were commensurate. The work was attacked on all sides by his ancient opponents, whose labours have long since quietly descended with their authors to merited oblivion; but De Foe, having the public on his side, set them all at defiance; and the same year he published a second volume with equal success. Thus far—

> " With steady bark and flowing sail
> He ran before the wind; "

[1] See Appendix, No. I.

but, incited by the hope of further profit, and conceiving the theme of Crusoe inexhaustible, he shortly after published *Serious Reflections during the Life of Robinson Crusoe, with his Vision of the Angelic World.* These Visions and Reflections were well received at the time, although by no means so much in requisition now.

With the return of his good fortune, our author's health was re-established, and the vigour of his mind restored. He published, in 1720, *The Life and Piracies of Captain Singleton;* and finding it safer, it would seem, as well as more profitable, to amuse the public than to reform them, he continued this course with little variation for the remainder of his life.

His subsequent publications, to all of which a considerable degree of popularity was attached, though none of them equalled the reputation of *Robinson Crusoe,* were *The Dumb Philosopher, History of Duncan Campbell, Remarkable Life of Colonel Jack, Fortunate Mistress,* and *New Voyage round the World.*

We are now to take leave of our author, who died on the 24th April, 1731, at the age of seventy, in Cripplegate, London, leaving a widow and large family in tolerable circumstances.[1]

That De Foe was a man of powerful intellect and lively imagination is obvious from his works; that he was possessed of an ardent temper, a resolute courage, and an unwearied spirit of enterprise, is ascertained by the events of his changeful career; and whatever may be thought of that rashness and improvidence, by which his progress in life was so frequently impeded, there seems no reason to withhold from him the praise of as much, nay more, integrity, sincerity, and consistency, than could have been expected in a political author writing for bread, and whose chief protector, Harley, was latterly of a different party from his own. As the author of *Robinson Crusoe,* his fame promises to endure as long as the language in which he wrote.

So far my late regretted friend. But these trifling sketches of literary biography being now collected, it seems injustice to the author of *Robinson Crusoe* to permit his memoirs to be inserted without a brief attempt to account for that popularity, which, in his principal work at least, has equalled that of any author who ever wrote.

And we must, in the first place, remark that the fertility of

[1] [For particulars of some unhappy family feuds which embittered De Foe's last days, and of his children surviving him, see Wilson's *Life and Times.*]

De Foe was astonishing. He wrote on all occasions, and on all subjects, and seemingly had little time for preparation upon the subject in hand, but treated it from the stores which his memory retained of early reading, and such hints as he had caught up in society, not one of which seems to have been lost upon him. A complete list of De Foe's works, notwithstanding the exertions of the late George Chalmers, has not yet been procured, and a perfect collection even of such books as he is well known to have written can scarce be procured, even by the most active bibliomaniac.[1] The preceding memoir does not notice one half of his compositions, all, even the meanest of which, have something in them to distinguish them as the works of an extraordinary man. It cannot, therefore, be doubted that he possessed a powerful memory to furnish him with materials, and a no less copious vein of imagination to weave them up into a web of his own, and supply the rich embroidery which in reality constitutes their chief value. De Foe does not display much acquaintance with classic learning, neither does it appear that his attendance on the Newington seminary had led him deep into the study of ancient languages. His own language is genuine English, often simple even to vulgarity, but always so distinctly impressive that its very vulgarity had, as we shall presently show, an efficacy in giving an air of truth or probability to the facts and sentiments it conveys. Exclusive of politics, De Foe's studies led chiefly to those popular narratives, which are the amusement of children and of the lower classes; those accounts of travellers who have visited remote countries; of voyagers who have made discoveries of new lands and strange nations; of pirates and buccaneers who have acquired wealth by their desperate adventures on the ocean. His residence at Limehouse, near the Thames, must have made him acquainted with many of those wild mariners, half privateers, half robbers, whom he must often have heard relate their adventures, and with whose manners and sentiments he thus became intimately acquainted. There is reason to believe, from a passage in his *Review* (we have unfortunately mislaid the reference), that he was acquainted with Dampier, a mariner, whose scientific skill in his profession and power of literary composition were at that time rarely found in his profession, especially among those rough sons of the ocean who acknowledged no peace beyond the Line, and had as

[1] The author has long sought for his poem termed *Caledonia*, without being able to obtain a sight of it. [The reader is referred to Wilson's *Life and Times* (1830) for some account of this poem; and for a catalogue of 210 books and pamphlets "attributed to De Foe."]

natural an enmity to a South American Spaniard as a greyhound to a hare, and who, though distinguished by the somewhat milder term of buccaneer, were little better than absolute pirates. The English Government, it is well known, were not, however, very active in destroying this class of adventurers while they confined their depredations to the Dutch and Spaniards, and, indeed, seldom disturbed them, if they returned from their roving life, and sat down to enjoy their ill-gotten gains. The courage of these men, the wonderful risks which they incurred, their hair-breadth escapes, and the romantic countries through which they travelled, seem to have had infinite charms for De Foe. He has written several books on this subject, all of which are entertaining, and remarkable for the accuracy with which he personates the character of a buccaneering adventurer. The *New Voyage round the World*, the *Voyages and Piracies of Captain Singleton*, are of this class, and the second part of *Robinson Crusoe* properly belongs to it. De Foe's general acquaintance with nautical affairs has not been doubted, as he is said never to misapply the various sea-phrases, or show an ignorance unbecoming the character under which he wrote. His remarks upon trade, which are naturally mixed with these accounts of foreign parts, might naturally be expected from one whose speculations in every channel of trade had enabled him to write *An Account of Commerce*, and also a work called the *English Tradesman*, from which he appears to have been familiar with foreign countries, their produce, their manners, and government, and whatever rendered it easy or difficult to enter into trade with them.[1] We may therefore conclude that *Purchas's Pilgrim*, *Hackluyt's Voyages*, and the other ancient authorities, had been curiously examined by him, as well as those of his friend Dampier, of Wafer, and others who had been in the South Seas, whether as privateers, or, as it was then called, *Upon the account*.

Shylock observes, there are land thieves and water thieves; and as De Foe was familiar with the latter, so he was not without some knowledge of the practices and devices of the former.

[1] [A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* observes, "De Foe's life must itself have been singular. Whence came so able a geographer? Not only a geographer, but so well acquainted with the productions, animal and vegetable, of America! Whence came he not only so knowing in trade, but so able a mechanic, and versed in so many trades! Admirably as Dr. Swift has contrived to conceive proportional ideas of giants and pigmies, and to form his calculations accordingly, he is superficial when compared with the details in *Robinson Crusoe*. The Doctor was an able satirist: De Foe might have founded a colony."—Vol. lv., p. 882.]

We are afraid we must impute to his long and repeated imprisonments the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the secrets of thieves and mendicants, their acts of plunder, concealment, and escape. But whatever way he acquired his knowledge of low life, De Foe certainly possessed it in the most extensive sense, and applied it in the composition of several works of fiction, in the style termed by the Spaniards *Gusto Picaresco*, of which no man was ever a greater master. This class of the fictitious narrative may be termed the Romance of Roguery, the subjects being the adventures of thieves, rogues, vagabonds, and swindlers, including viragoes and courtesans. The improved taste of the present age has justly rejected this coarse species of amusement, which is, besides, calculated to do an infinite deal of mischief among the lower classes, as it presents in a comic, or even heroic shape, the very crimes and vices to which they are otherwise most likely to be tempted. Nevertheless, the strange and blackguard scenes which De Foe describes are fit to be compared to the gipsy-boys of the Spanish painter Murillo, which are so justly admired, as being, in truth of conception, and spirit of execution, the very *chef d'œuvres* of art, however low and loathsome the originals from which they are taken. Of this character is the *History of Colonel Jack*, for example, which had an immense popularity among the lower classes; that of *Moll Flanders*, a shoplifter and prostitute; that of *Mrs. Christian Davis*, called *Mother Ross;* and that of *Roxana*, as she is termed, a courtesan in higher life. All of these contain strong marks of genius; in the last they are particularly predominant. But from the coarseness of the narrative, and the vice and vulgarity of the actors, the reader feels as a well-principled young man may do, when seduced by some entertaining and dissolute libertine into scenes of debauchery, that, though he may be amused, he must be not a little ashamed of that which furnishes the entertainment. So that, though we could select from these *picaresque* romances a good deal that is not a little amusing, we let them pass by, as we would persons, howsoever otherwise interesting, who may not be in character and manners entirely fit for good society.

A second species of composition, to which the author's active and vigorous genius was peculiarly adapted, was the account of great national convulsions, whether by war, or by the pestilence, or the tempest. These were tales which are sure, when even moderately well told, to arrest the attention, and which, narrated with that impression of reality which De Foe knew so well how

to convey, make the hair bristle and the skin creep. In this manner he has written the *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, which have been often read and quoted as a real production of a real personage. Born himself almost immediately after the Restoration, De Foe must have known many of those who had been engaged in the civil turmoils of 1642-6, to which the period of these memoirs refers. He must have lived among them at that age when boys, such as we conceive De Foe must necessarily have been, cling to the knees of those who can tell them of the darings and the dangers of their youth, at a period when their own passions, and views of pressing forward in life, have not begun to operate upon their minds, and while they are still pleased to listen to the adventures which others have encountered on that stage, which they themselves have not yet entered upon.[1] The *Memoirs of a Cavalier* have certainly been enriched with some such anecdotes as were likely to fire De Foe's active and powerful imagination, and hint to him in what colours the subject ought to be treated.

The contrast betwixt the soldiers of the celebrated Tilly, and those of the illustrious Gustavus Adolphus, almost seems too minutely drawn to have been executed from anything short of ocular testimony. But De Foe's genius has shown, in this and other instances, how completely he could assume the character he describes.

The troops of Tilly are thus described:—

"I that had seen Tilly's army, and his old weather-beaten soldiers, whose discipline and exercises were so exact, and their courage so often tried, could not look on the Saxon army without some concern for them, when I considered who they had to deal with. Tilly's men were rugged surly fellows, their faces had an air of hardy courage, mangled with wounds and scars, their armour showed the bruises of musket bullets, and the rust of the winter storms. I observed of them their clothes were always dirty, but their arms were clean and bright; they were used to camp in the open fields, and sleep in the frosts and rain; their horses were strong and hardy like themselves, and well taught their exercises;

[1] ["Time rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and wither'd of their force,
Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep from them our sight! Time rolls his ceaseless course."
Lady of the Lake, Canto iii.]

the soldiers knew their business so exactly that general orders were enough; every private man was fit to command, and their wheelings, marchings, countermarchings, and exercise, were done with such order and readiness, that the distinct words of command were hardly of any use among them; they were flushed with victory, and hardly knew what it was to fly." [1]

The discipline of Gustavus Adolphus is thus favourably contrasted with that of his enemy:—

"When I saw the Swedish troops, their exact discipline, their order, the modesty and familiarity of their officers, and the regular living of the soldiers, their camp seemed a well-ordered city; the meanest country-woman, with her market-ware, was as safe from violence as in the streets of Vienna. There were no regiments of whores and rogues as followed the imperialists; nor any women in the camp, but such as being known to the provosts to be the wives of the soldiers, who were necessary for washing linen, taking care of the soldiers' clothes, and dressing their victuals.

"The soldiers were well clad, not gay, furnished with excellent arms, and exceeding careful of them; and though they did not seem so terrible as I thought Tilly's men did when I first saw them, yet the figure they made, together with what we had heard of them, made them seem to me invincible; the discipline and order of their marchings, camping, and exercise, was excellent and singular, and which was to be seen in no armies but the king's, his own skill, judgment, and vigilance, having added much to the general conduct of armies then in use." [2]

When the Great Rebellion broke out in England, in which the supposed author is actively engaged, the following slight touch more completely brings home the miseries of an internal contest than could a whole volume of reflections on the subject.

"I was now, by the king's particular favour, summoned to the councils of war, my father continuing absent and ill; and I began to think of the real grounds, and, which was more, of the fatal issue of this war. I say I now began it; for I cannot say that I ever rightly stated matters in my own mind before, though I had been enough used to blood, and to see the destruction of people, sacking of towns, and plundering the country; yet it was in Germany, and among strangers; but I found a strange, secret, and unaccountable sadness upon my spirits to see this acting in my own native country. It grieved me to the heart, even in the rout of our enemies, to see the slaughter of them; and even in the fight, to hear a man cry for quarter in English, moved me to a commiseration which I had never been used to; nay, sometimes it looked to me as if some of my own men had been beaten: and when I heard a soldier cry, O God, I am shot! I looked behind to see which of my own troop was fallen. Here I saw myself at the cutting of the throats of my friends; and, indeed, some of my near relations.

[1] *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, vol. i., ch. iii. [2] Ibid. vol. i., ch. iv.

My old comrades and fellow-soldiers in Germany were some with us, some against us, as their opinions happened to differ in religion. For my part, I confess I had not much religion in me at that time; but I thought religion, rightly practised on both sides, would have made us all better friends." [1]

The *History of the Great Plague in London* is one of that particular class of compositions which hovers between romance and history. Undoubtedly De Foe embodied a number of traditions upon this subject with what he might actually have read, or of which he might otherwise have received direct evidence. The subject is hideous almost to disgust, yet, even had he not been the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, De Foe would have deserved immortality for the genius which he has displayed in this work, as well as in the *Memoirs of a Cavalier*. This dreadful disease, which, in the language of Scripture, might be described as " the pestilence which walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon-day," was indeed a fit subject for a pencil so veracious as that of De Foe; and, accordingly, he drew pictures almost too horrible to look upon.

It is a wonder how so excellent a subject as the Great Fire of London should have escaped the notice of De Foe, so eager for subjects of a popular character. Yet we can hardly regret this, since besides the verses of Dryden in the *Annus Mirabilis*, the accounts by two contemporaries, Evelyn and Pepys, have sketched it in all its terrible brilliancy.

The Great Storm, which, on 26th November, 1703, in Addison's phrase, " o'er pale Britannia pass'd," was seized upon by De Foe as a subject for the exercise of his powers of description. But as it consists in a great measure of letters from the country, wretched pastoral poetry (for De Foe was only a poet in prose), and similar buckram and binding used by bookmakers, it does not do the genius of the author the same credit as the works before named.

A third species of composition, for which this multifarious author showed a strong predilection, was that upon theurgy, magic, ghost-seeing, witchcraft, and the occult sciences. De Foe dwells on such subjects with so much unction as to leave us little doubt that he was to a certain point a believer in something resembling an immediate communication between the inhabitants of this world, and of that which we shall in future inhabit. He is particularly strong on the subject of secret forebodings, mysterious impressions, bodements of good

[1] *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, vol. ii., ch. ii.

or evil, which arise in our own mind, but which yet seem impressed there by some external agent, and not to arise from the course of our natural reflections. Perhaps he even acted upon these supposed inspirations; for the following passage plainly refers to his own history, though, whether he speaks for the nonce, or means to be seriously understood, we cannot pretend to judge, though we incline to the latter opinion.

"I know a man who made it his rule always to obey these silent hints, and he has often declared to me, that when he obeyed them, he never miscarried; and if he neglected them, or went on contrary to them, he never succeeded; and gave me a particular case of his own, among a great many others, wherein he was thus directed. He had a particular case befallen him, wherein he was under the displeasure of the government, and was prosecuted for a misdemeanour, and brought to a trial in the King's Bench Court, where a verdict was brought against him, and he was cast; and times running very hard at that time against the party he belonged to, he was afraid to stand the hazard of a sentence, and absconded, taking care to make due provision for his bail, and to pay them whatever they might suffer. In this circumstance he was in great distress, and no way presented unto him but to fly out of the kingdom, which, being to leave his family, children, and employment, was very bitter to him, and he knew not what to do; all his friends advising him not to put himself into the hands of the law, which, though the offence was not capital, yet, in his circumstances, seemed to threaten his utter ruin. In this extremity, he felt one morning (just as he had awaked, and the thoughts of his misfortune began to return upon him), I say he felt a strong impulse darting into his mind thus, *Write a letter to them:* It spoke so distinctly to him, and as it were forcibly, that, as he has often said since, he can scarce persuade himself not to believe but that he heard it; but he grants that he did not really hear it, too.

"However, it repeated the words daily and hourly to him, till at length, walking about in his chamber where he was hidden, very pensive and sad, it jogged him again, and he answered aloud to it, as if it had been a voice, *Whom shall I write to?* It returned immediately, *Write to the judge.* This pursued him again for several days, till at length he took his pen, ink, and paper, and sat down to write, but knew not one word of what he should say; but, *Dabitur in hac hora*, he wanted not words. It was immediately impressed on his mind, and the words flowed upon his pen in a manner that even charmed himself, and filled him with expectations of success.

"This letter was so strenuous in argument, so pathetic in its eloquence, and so moving and persuasive, that, as soon as the judge read it, he sent him word he should be easy, for he would endeavour to make that matter light to him, and, in a word, never left till he obtained to stop prosecution, and restore him to his liberty and his family."[1]

[1] *Robinson Crusoe's Vision of the Angelic World*, pp. 48-50. London, 1720.

Whatever were De Foe's real sentiments on those mystic subjects, there is no doubt that he was fond of allowing his mind to dwell on them; and, either from his own taste, or because he reckoned them peculiarly calculated to attract the notice of a numerous class of readers, many of his popular publications turn upon supernatural visitation. Thus he wrote "An Essay on the history and reality of Apparitions; being an account of what they are, and what they are not; whence they come, and whence they come not; as also how we may distinguish between the apparitions of good and evil spirits, and how we ought to behave to them." This *Essay on Apparitions* was afterwards published under the name of Morton. De Foe, under the name of John Beaumont, Esq., wrote *A Treatise of Spirits, Apparitions, Witchcraft, and other Magical Practices; containing an Account of Genii and Familiar Spirits, etc.* In both of these works De Foe's reasoning, if it can be called such, belongs to the Platonic System of Dr. Henry More, but is not very consistent either with that or with itself. On the other hand, the examples, or, in other words, the stories of ghosts and magic, with which we are favoured, are remarkably well told, or, rather, we should say, composed, and that with an air of perfect veracity, which nobody so well knew how to preserve as our author. To this class of his writings must be added the *Life of Duncan Campbell, the Conjurer and Fortune-teller*, a fellow who pretended to be deaf and dumb, and to tell fortunes, and whose reputation was such at the time that De Foe thought his name would sell more than one book, and also wrote the *Spy on the Conjurer;* for, pressed by his circumstances to seek out such subjects as were popular for the moment, our author was apt to adhere to those which he had already treated with approbation. Thus, he not only wrote a second part to *Robinson Crusoe*, which is greatly inferior to the first part of that inimitable romance, but he drew a third draft on the popularity which it had acquired him, by a work of the mystical kind to which we have just alluded. This last seems the perfection of book-making. It is termed, *Serious Reflections during the Life of Robinson Crusoe, with his Vision of the Angelic World.* The contents are, in general, trite enough reflections upon moral subjects; and though Robinson Crusoe's solitary state is sometimes referred to, and the book is ornamented with a bird's-eye view of the memorable island, yet it contains few observations that might not have been made by any shopkeeper living at Charing Cross. Thus may the richest

source of genius be exhausted, and the most plentiful flow of invention drained off to the very dregs.

Besides those three several species of romantic fiction, in each of which Daniel De Foe was a copious author, his unwearied pen was also turned to moral and philosophical subjects, to those which relate to the economy of life, to history, and to statistics and descriptive subjects. He wrote *Travels in North and South Britain;* he wrote a *History of the Union;* he wrote an incorrect *History of the Church of Scotland, from the Restoration to the Revolution.* None of these historical works are of much value, except, perhaps, the *History of the Union,* which is little more than a dry journal of what passed in the Scottish Parliament upon that remarkable occasion; yet De Foe must have had an interesting tale to tell, if he had chosen it. But, writing under Harley's patronage, he cramped his genius, probably, to avoid the risk of giving offence to the irritable Scottish nation. Among his numerous political tracts, the most interesting perhaps is, *The History of Addresses,* which, written with great power of sarcasm, places in a ludicrous and contemptible light that mode of communication between the people and the throne. All must recollect the story of Richard Cromwell, who, in removing from Whitehall, no longer his own, begged that particular care might be taken of a large chest, which contained, he said, "all the lives and fortunes of England," pledged, of course, in support of the Second Protector, by those who now saw him, with the utmost indifference, dragged from the seat of government.

It is not, however, of such political subjects that we have undertaken to treat. The multifarious author whose head imagined, and whose pen executed, such variety of works upon them that it is a labour even to collect their names, must be now treated of solely in his character of a writer of fictitious composition.

And here, before proceeding to attempt a few observations on *Robinson Crusoe* in particular, it may be necessary to consider what is the particular charm which carries the reader through, not that *chef-d'œuvre* alone, but others of De Foe's compositions, and inspires a reluctance to lay down the volume till the tale is finished; and the desire, not generally felt in the perusal of works of fiction, to read every sentence and word upon every leaf, instead of catching up as much of the story as may enable us to understand the conclusion.

It cannot be the beauty of the style which thus commands the

reader's attention; for that of De Foe, though often forcible, is rather rendered so by the interest of a particular situation than by the art of the writer. In general the language is loose and inaccurate, often tame and creeping, and almost always that of the lower classes in society. Neither does the charm depend upon the character of the incidents; for although in *Robinson Crusoe* the incidents are very fine, yet in the *History of the Plague* the events are disgusting, and scarce less in those works where the scene lies in low life. Yet, like Pistol eating his leek, we go on growling and reading to the end of the volume, while we nod over many a more elegant subject, treated by authors who exhibit a far greater command of language. Neither can it be the artful conducting of the story, by which we are so much interested. De Foe seems to have written too rapidly to pay the least attention to this circumstance; the incidents are huddled together like paving-stones discharged from a cart, and have as little connection between the one and the other. The scenes merely follow, without at all depending on each other. They are not like those of the regular drama, connected together by a regular commencement, continuation, and conclusion, but rather resemble the pictures in a showman's box, which have no relation further than as being enclosed within the same box, and subjected to the action of the same string.

To what, then, are we to ascribe this general charm attached to the romances of De Foe? We presume to answer, that it is chiefly to be ascribed to the unequalled dexterity with which our author has given an appearance of REALITY to the incidents which he narrates. Even De Foe's deficiencies in style, his homeliness of language, his rusticity of thought, expressive of what is called the *Crassa Minerva*, seem to claim credit for him as one who speaks the truth, the rather that we suppose he wants the skill to conceal or disguise it. The principle is almost too simple to need illustration; and yet, as it seems to include something of a paradox, since in fact it teaches that with the more art a story is told, the less likely it is to attract earnest attention, it may be proved by reference to common life. If we meet with a friend in the street, who tells us a story containing something beyond usual interest, and not of everyday occurrence, our feeling with respect to the truth of the story will be much influenced by the character of the narrator. If he is a man of wit or humour, and places the ludicrous part of the tale in the most prominent point of view, the hearer will be apt to recollect that his friend is a wag, and make some grains of allowance

accordingly. On the other hand, supposing the person who communicates the narrative to be of a sentimental or enthusiastic character, with romantic ideas and a store of words to express them, you listen to his tale with a sort of suspicion that it is *too well* told to be truly told, and that though it may be at bottom real, yet it has been embroidered over by the flourishes of the narrator. But if the same fact be told by a man of plain sense, and sufficient knowledge of the world, the minuteness with which he tells the story, mixing up with it a number of circumstances, which are not otherwise connected with it than as existing at the same moment, seems to guarantee the truth of what he says; and the bursts, whether of mirth or of emotion, which accompany the narrative, appear additional warrants of his fidelity, because neither is the usual mood of his mind. You believe, as coming from such a person, that which upon other information you might have thought an imposition, as Benedick credits the report of Beatrice's affection towards him, because "the fellow with the grey beard said it."

In the testimony of such a person upon a subject which is at all interesting, we generally detect some point which ascertains the eye-witness, and some expression which would seem to have only occurred to an individual who had heard and seen the facts to which he speaks. Those who are in the habit of attending courts of justice, during the leading of evidence, frequently hear, not only from men or women of observation, but from "iron-witted fools and unrespective boys," such striking circumstances as the following: A horrible murder had been committed by a man upon a person whom he had invited into his house in friendship; they were alone together when the deed was done, and the murderer, throwing on his coat, hastily left the house before the deed was discovered. A child of twelve or thirteen years old gave evidence that she was playing in the under part of the dwelling, and heard the accused person run hastily down stairs, and stumble at the threshold. She said she was very much frightened at the noise she heard; and being asked whether she had ever before thought of being frightened by a man running hurriedly down stairs, she replied no; but the noise then made was like no other she had ever heard before. The poet of the most active imagination would hardly have dared to ascribe such impressive effects to the wild and precipitate retreat of guilt in making its escape from justice. This peculiar effect upon the child's imagination we might have doubted if we had read

it in fiction, and yet how striking it becomes, heard from the mouth of the child herself!

It is no doubt true that, in assuming this peculiar style of narrative, the author does so at a certain risk. He debars himself from the graces of language, and the artifice of narrative; he must sometimes seem prolix, sometimes indistinct and obscure, though possessing occasional points of brilliancy; in which respect his story may resemble some old Catholic towns on the continent, where the streets are left in general darkness, save at those favoured spots where lamps are kept burning before the altars of particular saints; whereas, a regularly composed narrative represents an English country town, so well lighted throughout that no particular spot, scarce even the dwelling of Mr. Mayor, or the window of the apothecary, can exhibit any glow of peculiar lustre. And certainly it is the last style which should be attempted by a writer of inferior genius; for though it be possible to disguise mediocrity by fine writing, it appears in all its native inanity, when it assumes the garb of simplicity. Besides this peculiar style of writing requires that the author possess King Fadlallah's secret of transmigrating from one body to another, and possessing himself of all the qualities which he finds in the assumed character, retaining his own taste and judgment to direct them.

Sometimes this is done by the author avowedly taking upon himself an imaginary personage, and writing according to his supposed feelings and prejudices. What would be the Vicar of Wakefield's history unless told by the kindest and worthiest pedant that ever wore a cassock, namely the vicar himself? And what would be the most interesting and affecting, as well as the most comic, passages of *Castle Rackrent*, if narrated by one who had a less regard for "the family" than the immortal Thady, who, while he sees that none of the dynasty which he celebrates were perfectly right, has never been able to puzzle out wherein they were certainly wrong. Mr. Galt's country Provost, and still more his reverend Annalist of the Parish, should be also distinguished in this class. Wordsworth, himself, has assumed, in one of his affecting poems, the character of a sea-faring person retired to settle in the country.

These are, however, all characters of masquerade: we believe that of De Foe was entirely natural to him. The high-born cavalier, for instance, speaks nearly the same species of language, and shows scarce a greater knowledge of society than Robinson Crusoe; only he has a cast of the grenadier about him, as the

other has the trim of a seaman. It is greatly to be doubted whether De Foe could have changed his colloquial, circuitous, and periphrastic style for any other, whether more coarse or more elegant. We have little doubt it was connected with his nature, and the particular turn of his thoughts and ordinary expressions, and that he did not succeed so much by writing in an assumed manner, as by giving full scope to his own.

The subject is so interesting that it is worth while examining it a little more closely; with which view we have reprinted, as illustrating our commentary on what may be called the *plausible* style of composition, *The True History of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veal the next day after her Death, to one Mrs. Bargrave, at Canterbury, the eighth of September*, 1705, *which Apparition recommends the perusal of Drelincourt's Book of Consolation against the Fears of Death.*" [1] We are induced to this, because the account of the origin of the pamphlet is curious, the pamphlet itself short, and, though once highly popular, now little read or known, and particularly because De Foe has put in force, within these few pages, peculiar specimens of his art of recommending the most improbable narrative, by his specious and serious mode of telling it.

An adventurous bookseller had ventured to print a considerable edition of a work by the Reverend Charles Drelincourt, minister of the Calvinist Church in Paris, and translated by M. D'Assigny, under the title of the *Christian's Defence against the fear of Death, with several directions how to prepare ourselves to die well.* But however certain the prospect of death, it is not so agreeable (unfortunately) as to invite the eager contemplation of the public; and Drelincourt's book, being neglected, lay a dead stock on the hands of the publisher. In this emergency, he applied to De Foe to assist him (by dint of such means as were then, as well as now, pretty well understood in the literary world) in rescuing the unfortunate book from the literary death to which general neglect seemed about to consign it.

De Foe's genius and audacity devised a plan, which, for assurance and ingenuity, defied even the powers of Mr. Puff in the *Critic;* for who but himself would have thought of summoning up a ghost from the grave to bear witness in favour of a halting body of divinity? There is a matter-of-fact, businesslike style in the whole account of the transaction, which bespeaks ineffable powers of self-possession. The narrative is drawn up "by a gentleman, a *Justice of Peace* at Maidstone, in Kent, a very

[1] [See Appendix, No. II.]

intelligent person." And, moreover, "the discourse is attested by a very sober and understanding gentlewoman, who lives in Canterbury, within a few doors of the house in which Mrs. Bargrave lives." The justice believes his kinswoman to be of so discerning a spirit as not to be put upon by any fallacy—and the kinswoman positively assures the justice, "that the whole matter, as it is related and laid down, is really true, and what she herself heard, as near as may be, from Mrs. Bargrave's own mouth, who, she knows, had no reason to invent or publish such a story, or any design to forge and tell a lie, being a woman of so much honesty and virtue, and her whole life a course, as it were, of piety." Scepticism itself could not resist this triple court of evidence so artfully combined, the justice attesting for the discerning spirit of the sober and understanding gentlewoman his kinswoman, and his kinswoman becoming bail for the veracity of Mrs. Bargrave. And here, gentle reader, admire the simplicity of those days. Had Mrs. Veal's visit to her friend happened in our time, the conductors of the daily press would have given the word, and seven gentlemen, unto the said press belonging, would, with an obedient start, have made off for Kingston, for Canterbury, for Dover—for Kamtschatka if necessary—to pose the justice, cross-examine Mrs. Bargrave, confront the sober and understanding kinswoman, and dig Mrs. Veal up from her grave, rather than not get to the bottom of the story. But in our time we doubt and scrutinise: our ancestors wondered and believed.

Before the story is commenced, the understanding gentlewoman (not the justice of peace), who is the reporter, takes some pains to repel the objections made against the story by some of the friends of Mrs. Veal's brother, who consider the marvel as an aspersion on their family, and do what they can to laugh it out of countenance. Indeed, it is allowed, with admirable impartiality, that Mr. Veal is too much of a gentleman to suppose Mrs. Bargrave invented the story—scandal itself could scarce have supposed that—although one notorious liar, who is chastised towards the conclusion of the story, ventures to throw out such an insinuation. No reasonable or respectable person, however, could be found to countenance the suspicion, and Mr. Veal himself opined that Mrs. Bargrave had been driven crazy by a cruel husband, and dreamed the whole story of the apparition. Now all this is sufficiently artful. To have vouched the fact as universally known, and believed by every one, *nem. con.*, would not have been half so satisfactory to a sceptic as to

allow fairly that the narrative had been impugned, and hint at the character of one of those sceptics, and the motives of another, as sufficient to account for their want of belief. Now to the fact itself.

Mrs. Bargrave and Mrs. Veal had been friends in youth, and had protested their attachment should last as long as they lived; but when Mrs. Veal's brother obtained an office in the customs at Dover, some cessation of their intimacy ensued, "though without any positive quarrel." Mrs. Bargrave had removed to Canterbury, and was residing in a house of her own, when she was suddenly interrupted by a visit from Mrs. Veal, as she was sitting in deep contemplation of certain distresses of her own. The visitor was in a riding-habit, and announced herself as prepared for a distant journey (which seems to intimate that spirits have a considerable distance to go before they arrive at their appointed station, and that the females at least put on a *habit* for the occasion). The spirit, for such was the seeming Mrs. Veal, continued to waive the ceremony of salutation, both in going and coming, which will remind the reader of a ghostly lover's reply to his mistress in the fine old Scottish ballad:

> "Why should I come within thy bower?
> I am no earthly man:
> And should I kiss thy rosy lips,
> Thy days would not be lang."

They then began to talk in the homely style of middle-aged ladies, and Mrs. Veal proses concerning the conversations they had formerly held, and the books they had read together. Her very recent experience probably led Mrs. Veal to talk of death, and the books written on the subject, and she pronounced, *ex cathedrâ*, as a dead person was best entitled to do, that "Drelincourt's book on death was the best book on the subject ever written." She also mentioned Dr. Sherlock, two Dutch books which had been translated, and several others; but Drelincourt, she said, had the clearest notions of death and the future state of any who had handled that subject. She then asked for the work [we marvel the edition and impress had not been mentioned] and lectured on it with great eloquence and affection. Dr. Kenrick's *Ascetick* was also mentioned with approbation by this critical spectre [the Doctor's work was no doubt a tenant of the shelf in some favourite publisher's shop]; and Mr. Norris's *Poem on Friendship*, a work which, I doubt, though honoured with a ghost's approbation, we may now seek for as vainly as

Correlli tormented his memory to recover the sonata which the devil played to him in a dream. Presently after, from former habits we may suppose, the guest desires a cup of tea; but, bethinking herself of her new character, escapes from her own proposal by recollecting that Mr. Bargrave was in the habit of breaking his wife's china. It would have been indeed strangely out of character if the spirit had lunched, or breakfasted upon tea and toast. Such a consummation would have sounded as ridiculous as if the statue of the commander in *Don Juan* had not only accepted of the invitation of the libertine to supper, but had also committed a beaf-steak to his flinty jaws and stomach of adamant. A little more conversation ensued of a less serious nature, and tending to show that even the passage from life to death leaves the female anxiety about person and dress somewhat alive. The ghost asked Mrs. Bargrave whether she did not think her very much altered, and Mrs. Bargrave of course complimented her on her good looks. Mrs. Bargrave also admired the gown which Mrs. Veal wore, and as a mark of her perfectly restored confidence, the spirit let her into the important secret, that it was a *scoured silk,* and lately made up. She informed her also of another secret, namely, that one Mr. Bretton had allowed her ten pounds a-year; and, lastly, she requested that Mrs. Bargrave would write to her brother, and tell him how to distribute her mourning rings, and mentioned there was a purse of gold in her cabinet. She expressed some wish to see Mrs. Bargrave's daughter; but when that good lady went to the next door to seek her, she found on her return the guest leaving the house. She had got without the door, in the street, in the face of the beast market, on a Saturday, which is market day, and stood ready to part. She said she must be going, as she had to call upon her cousin Watson (this appears to be a *gratis dictum* on the part of the ghost), and, maintaining the character of mortality to the last, she quietly turned the corner, and walked out of sight.

Then came the news of Mrs. Veal's having died the day before at noon. Says Mrs. Bargrave, "I am sure she was with me on Saturday almost two hours." And in comes Captain Watson, and says Mrs. Veal was certainly dead. And then come all the pieces of evidence, and especially the striped silk gown. Then Mrs. Watson cried out, "You have seen her indeed, for none knew but Mrs. Veal and I that that gown was scoured;" and she cried that the gown was described exactly, for, said she, "I helped her to make it up." And next we have the silly attempts

made to discredit the history. Even Mr. Veal, her brother, was obliged to allow that the gold was found, but with a difference, and pretended it was not found in a cabinet, but elsewhere; and, in short, we have all the gossip of *says I*, and *thinks I*, and *says she*, and *thinks she*, which disputed matters usually excite in a country town.

When we have thus turned the tale the seam without, it may be thought too ridiculous to have attracted notice. But whoever will read it as told by De Foe himself, will agree that, could the thing have happened in reality, so it would have been told. The sobering the whole supernatural visit into the language of middle or low life gives it an air of probability even in its absurdity. The ghost of an exciseman's housekeeper, and a seamstress, were not to converse like Brutus with his Evil Genius. And the circumstances of scoured silks, broken tea-china, and suchlike, while they are the natural topics of such persons' conversation, would, one might have thought, be the last which an inventor would have introduced into a pretended narrative betwixt the dead and living. In short, the whole is so distinctly circumstantial that, were it not for the impossibility, or extreme improbability at least, of such an occurrence, the evidence could not but support the story.

The effect was most wonderful. *Drelincourt upon Death*, attested by one who could speak from experience, took an unequalled run. The copies had hung on the bookseller's hands as heavy as a pile of lead bullets. They now traversed the town in every direction, like the same balls discharged from a field-piece. In short, the object of Mrs. Veal's apparition was perfectly attained.

The air of writing with all the plausibility of truth must, in almost every case, have its own peculiar value; as we admire the paintings of some Flemish artists, where, though the subjects drawn are mean and disagreeable, and such as in nature we would not wish to study or look close upon, yet the skill with which they are represented by the painter gives an interest to the imitation upon canvas which the original entirely wants. But, on the other hand, when the power of exact and circumstantial delineation is applied to objects which we are anxiously desirous to see in their proper shape and colours, we have a double source of pleasure, both in the art of the painter, and in the interest which we take in the subject represented. Thus the style of probability with which De Foe invested his narratives was perhaps ill bestowed, or rather wasted, upon some of the works

which he thought proper to produce, and cannot recommend to us the subject of *Colonel Jack* and *Moll Flanders;* but, on the other hand, the same talent throws an air of truth about the delightful history of *Robinson Crusoe,* which we never could have believed it possible to have united with so extraordinary a situation as is assigned to the hero. All the usual scaffolding and machinery employed in composing fictitious history are carefully discarded. The early incidents of the tale, which in ordinary works of invention are usually thrown out as pegs to hang the conclusion upon, are in this work only touched upon, and suffered to drop out of sight. Robinson, for example, never hears anything more of his elder brother, who enters Lockhart's Dragoons in the beginning of the work, and who, in any common romance, would certainly have appeared before the conclusion. We lose sight at once and for ever of the interesting Xury; and the whole earlier adventures of our voyager vanish, not to be recalled to our recollection by the subsequent course of the story. His father—the good old merchant of Hull—all the other persons who have been originally active in the drama—vanish from the scene, and appear not again. This is not the case in the ordinary romance, where the author, however luxuriant his invention, does not willingly quit possession of the creatures of his imagination till they have rendered him some services upon the scene; whereas in common life, it rarely happens that our early acquaintances exercise much influence upon the fortunes of our future life.

Our friend Robinson, thereafter, in the course of his roving and restless life, is at length thrown upon his Desert Island, a situation in which, existing as a solitary being, he became an example of what the unassisted energies of an individual of the human race can perform; and the author has, with wonderful exactness, described him as acting and thinking precisely as such a man must have thought and acted in such an extraordinary situation.

Pathos is not De Foe's general characteristic; he had too little delicacy of mind; when it comes, it comes uncalled, and is created by the circumstances, not sought for by the author. The excess, for instance, of the natural longing for human society which Crusoe manifests while on board of the stranded Spanish vessel, by falling into a sort of agony, as he repeated the words, "Oh, that but one man had been saved!—Oh, that there had been but one!" is in the highest degree pathetic. The agonising reflections of the solitary, when he is in danger of being driven

to sea, in his rash attempt to circumnavigate his island, are also affecting.

In like manner we may remark that De Foe's genius did not approach the grand or terrific. The battles, which he is fond of describing, are told with the indifference of an old buccaneer, and probably in the very way in which he may have heard them recited by the actors. His goblins, too, are generally a commonplace sort of spirits, that bring with them very little of supernatural terror; and yet the fine incident of the print of the naked foot on the sand, with Robinson Crusoe's terrors in consequence, never fail to leave a powerful impression upon the reader.

The supposed situation of his hero was peculiarly favourable to the circumstantial style of De Foe. Robinson Crusoe was placed in a condition where it was natural that the slightest event should make an impression on him; and De Foe was not an author who would leave the slightest event untold. When he mentions that two shoes were driven ashore, and adds that they were not neighbours, we feel it an incident of importance to the poor solitary.

The assistance which De Foe derived from Selkirk's history seems of a very meagre kind. It is not certain that he was obliged to the real hermit of Juan Fernandez even for the original hint; for the putting mutineers or turbulent characters on shore upon solitary places was a practice so general among the buccaneers that there was a particular name for the punishment; it was called *marooning* a man. De Foe borrowed, perhaps, from the account in Woodes Rogers, the circumstances of the two huts, the abundance of goats, the clothing made out of their skins; and the turnips of Alexander Selkirk may have perhaps suggested the corn of Robinson Crusoe. Even these incidents, however, are so wrought up and heightened, and so much is added to make them interesting, that the bare circumstances occurring elsewhere cannot be said to infringe upon the author's claim to originality. On the whole, indeed, Robinson Crusoe is put to so many more trials of ingenuity, his comforts are so much increased, his solitude is so much diversified, and his account of his thoughts and occupations so distinctly traced, that the course of the work embraces a far wider circle of investigation into human nature than could be derived from that of Selkirk, who, for want of the tools and conveniences supplied to Crusoe by the wreck, relapses into a sort of savage state, which could have afforded little scope for delineation. It may, however,

be observed that De Foe may have known so much of Selkirk's history as to be aware how much his stormy passions were checked and tamed by his long course of solitude, and that, from being a kind of Will Atkins, a brawling dissolute seaman, he became (which was certainly the case) a grave, sober, reflective man. The manner in which Robinson Crusoe's moral sense and religious feeling are awakened and brought into action are important passages in the work.[1]

Amid these desultory remarks, it may be noticed, that, through all his romances, De Foe has made a great deal of the narrative depend upon lucky hits and accidents, which, as he is usually at some pains to explain, ought rather to be termed providential occurrences. This is coupled with a belief in spiritual communication in the way of strong internal suggestions, to which De Foe, as we have seen, was himself sufficiently willing to yield belief. Odd and surprising accidents do, indeed, frequently occur in human life; and when we hear them narrated we are interested in them, not only from the natural tendency of the human mind towards the extraordinary and wonderful, but also because we have some disposition to receive as truths circumstances, which, from their improbability, do not seem likely to be invented. It is the kind of good fortune, too, which every one wishes to himself, which comes without exertion, and just at the moment it is wanted; so that it gives a sort of pleasure to be reminded of the possibility of its arrival even in fiction.

The continuation of Robinson Crusoe's history after he obtains the society of his man Friday is less philosophical than that which turns our thoughts upon the efforts which a solitary individual may make for extending his own comforts in the melancholy situation in which he is placed, and upon the natural reflections suggested by the progress of his own mind. The character of Friday is nevertheless extremely pleasing; and the whole subsequent history of the shipwrecked Spaniards and the pirate vessel is highly interesting. Here certainly the *Memoirs of Robinson Crusoe* ought to have stopped. The Second Part, though containing many passages which display the author's genius, does not rise high in character above the

[1] We should say more on this subject, were it not that Mr. Howel, of Edinburgh, a person every way qualified for the task, has collected several particulars concerning the history of Selkirk, the prototype of Robinson Crusoe, which he designs shortly to lay before the public. [This curious work was published at Edinburgh in 1829—it is highly commended in Wilson's *Life and Times of De Foe.*]

Memoirs of Captain Singleton, or the other imaginary voyages of the author.

There scarce exists a work so popular as *Robinson Crusoe.* It is read eagerly by young people; and there is hardly an elf so devoid of imagination as not to have supposed for himself a solitary island in which he could act *Robinson Crusoe,* were it but in the corner of the nursery. To many it has given the decided turn of their lives, by sending them to sea. For the young mind is much less struck with the hardships of the anchorite's situation than with the animating exertions which he makes to overcome them; and *Robinson Crusoe* produces the same impression upon an adventurous spirit which the *Book of Martyrs* would do on a young devotee, or the *Newgate Calendar* upon an acolyte of Bridewell; both of which students are less terrified by the horrible manner in which the tale terminates, than animated by sympathy with the saints or depredators who are the heroes of their volume. Neither does a re-perusal of *Robinson Crusoe,* at a more advanced age, diminish our early impressions. The situation is such as every man may make his own, and, being possible in itself, is, by the exquisite art of the narrator, rendered as probable as it is interesting. It has the merit, too, of that species of accurate painting which can be looked at again and again with new pleasure.

Neither has the admiration of the work been confined to England, though Robinson Crusoe himself, with his rough good sense, his prejudices, and his obstinate determination not to sink under evils which can be surpassed by exertion, forms no bad specimen of the true-born Englishman. The rage for imitating a work so popular seems to have risen to a degree of frenzy; and, by a mistake not peculiar to this particular class of the *servum pecus,* the imitators did not attempt to apply De Foe's manner of managing the narrative to some situation of a different kind, but seized upon and caricatured the principal incidents of the shipwrecked mariner and the solitary island.

It is computed that within forty years from the appearance of the original work, no less than forty-one different *Robinsons* appeared, besides fifteen other imitations, in which other titles were used. Finally, though perhaps it is no great recommendation, the anti-social philosopher Rousseau will allow no other book than *Robinson Crusoe* in the hands of

Emilius.[1] Upon the whole, the work is as unlikely to lose its celebrity as it is to be equalled in its peculiar character by any other of similar excellence.

APPENDIX

No. I.

SOME ACCOUNT OF ALEXANDER SELKIRK

Woodes Rogers, who relieved Selkirk from his solitude, was commodore of a commercial expedition round the world, which sailed February 1709, and returned to Britain 1711. A project for the resettlement of the Bahama Islands having been submitted to Mr. Addison (then Secretary of State) in 1717, the measure was determined on, and Rogers was appointed to head the expedition. He died governor of those islands in 1732. The following is the account he gives of his meeting, off the island of Juan Fernandez, with Alexander Selkirk:—

"On February 1st, 1709, we came before the island of Juan Fernandez, having had a good observation the day before, and found our latitude to be 34 degrees 10 minutes south. In the afternoon we hoisted out our pinnace; and Captain Dover, with the boat's crew, went in her to go ashore, though we could not be less than four leagues off. As soon as the pinnace was gone, I went on board the *Duchess*, who admired our boat attempting going ashore at that distance from land. It was against my inclination: but to oblige Captain Dover, I let her go. As soon as it was dark we saw a light ashore. Our boat was then about a league off the island, and bore away for the ships as soon as she saw the lights. We put our lights aboard for the boat, though some were of opinion, the lights we saw were our boat's lights; but, as night came on, it appeared too large for that. We fired our quarter-deck gun and several muskets, showing lights in our mizen and foreshrouds, that our boat might

[1] ["Since we must have books, this is one, which, in my opinion, is a most excellent treatise on natural education. This is the first my Emilius shall read; his whole library shall long consist of this work only, which shall preserve an eminent rank to the very last. It shall be the text to which all our conversations on natural science are to serve only as a comment. It shall be a guide during our progress to maturity of judgment; and so long as our taste is not adulterated, the perusal of this book will afford us pleasure. And what surprising book is this? Is it Aristotle, is it Pliny, is it Buffon? No; it is *Robinson Crusoe*. The value and importance of the various arts are ordinarily estimated, not according to their real utility, but by the gratification which they administer to the fantastic desires of mankind. But Emilius shall be taught to view them in a different light: *Robinson Crusoe* shall teach him to value the stock of an ironmonger above that of the most magnificent toy-shop in Europe."—Rousseau.]

find us whilst we were in the lee of the island: About two in the morning our boat came on board, having been two hours on board the *Duchess*, that took them up astern of us; we were glad they got well off, because it began to blow. We were all convinced the light was on the shore, and designed to make our ships ready to engage, believing them to be French ships at anchor, and we must either fight them or want water. All this stir and apprehension arose, as we afterwards found, from one poor naked man, who passed in our imagination, at present, for a Spanish garrison, a body of Frenchmen, or a crew of pirates. While we were under these apprehensions, we stood on the back side of the island, in order to fall in with the southerly wind, till we were past the island; and then we came back to it again, and run close aboard the land that begins to make the north-east side.

" We still continued to reason upon this matter; and it is in a manner incredible, what strange notions many of our people entertained from the sight of the fire upon the island. It served, however, to show people's tempers and spirits; and we were able to give a tolerable guess how our men would behave, in case there really were any enemies upon the island. The flaws came heavy off the shore, and we were forced to reef our topsails when we opened the middle bay, where we expected to have found our enemy; but saw all clear, and no ships, nor in the other bay next the north-east end. These two bays are all that ships ride in, which recruit on this island; but the middle bay is by much the best. We guessed there had been ships there, but that they were gone on sight of us. We sent our yawl ashore about noon, with Captain Dover, Mr. Fry, and six men, all armed: Meanwhile we and the *Duchess* kept turning to get in, and such heavy flaws came off the land, that we were forced to let go our topsail sheet, keeping all hands to stand by our sails, for fear of the winds carrying them away: But when the flaws were gone, we had little or no wind. These flaws proceeded from the land, which is very high in the middle of the island. Our boat did not return; we sent our pinnace with the men armed, to see what was the occasion of the yawl's stay; for we were afraid that the Spaniards had a garrison there, and might have seized them. We put out a signal for our boat, and the *Duchess* showed a French ensign. Immediately our pinnace returned from the shore, and brought abundance of cray-fish, with a man clothed in goats' skins, who looked wilder than the first owners of them. He had been on the island four years and four months, being left there by Captain Stradling in the Cinque-ports; his name was Alexander Selkirk, a Scotchman, who had been master of the Cinque-ports, a ship that came here last with Captain Dampier, who told me, that this was the best man in her. I immediately agreed with him to be a mate on board our ship: It was he that made the fire last night when he saw our ships, which he judged to be English. During his stay here he saw several ships pass by, but only two came to anchor. As he went to view them, he found them to be Spaniards, and retired from them, upon which they shot at him: Had they been French he would have submitted; but chose to risk his dying alone on the island, rather than fall into the hands

of Spaniards in these parts; because he apprehended they would murder him, or make a slave of him in the mines; for he feared they would spare no stranger, that might be capable of discovering the South Seas.

"The Spaniards had landed, before he knew what they were; and they came so near him, that he had much ado to escape; for they not only shot at him, but pursued him to the woods, where he climbed to the top of a tree, at the foot of which they made water, and killed several goats just by, but went off again without discovering him. He told us that he was born in Scotland, and was bred a sailor from his youth. The reason of his being left here, was a difference between him and his captain; which, together with the ship's being leaky, made him willing rather to stay here, than go along with him at first; but when he was at last willing to go, the captain would not receive him. He had been at the island before, to wood and water, when two of the ship's company were left upon it for six months, till the ship returned, being chased thence by two French South Sea ships. He had with him his clothes and bedding, with a firelock, some powder, bullets, and tobacco, a hatchet, a knife, a kettle, a Bible, some practical pieces, and his mathematical instruments and books. He diverted and provided for himself as well as he could; but for the first eight months, had much ado to bear up against melancholy, and the terror of being left alone in such a desolate place. He built two huts with pimento-trees, covered them with long grass, and lined them with the skins of goats, which he killed with his gun as he wanted, so long as his powder lasted, which was but a pound; and that being almost spent, he got fire by rubbing two sticks of pimento wood together upon his knee. In the lesser hut, at some distance from the other, he dressed his victuals; and in the larger he slept, and employed himself in reading, singing psalms, and praying; so that he said, he was a better Christian, while in this solitude, than ever he was before, or than, he was afraid, he should ever be again.

"At first he never ate anything till hunger constrained him, partly for grief, and partly for want of bread and salt: Nor did he go to bed, till he could watch no longer; the pimento wood, which burnt very clear, served him both for fire and candle, and refreshed him with its fragrant smell. He might have had fish enough, but would not eat them for want of salt, because they occasioned a looseness, except cray-fish, which are as large as our lobsters, and very good: These he sometimes boiled, and at other times broiled; as he did his goat's flesh, of which he made very good broth, for they are not so rank as ours. He kept an account of 500 that he killed while there, and caught as many more, which he marked on the ear, and let go. When his powder failed, he took them by speed of foot; for his way of living, continual exercise of walking and running, cleared him of all gross humours; so that he ran with wonderful swiftness through the woods, and up the rocks and hills, as we perceived when we employed him to catch goats for us: We had a bull dog, which we sent with several of our nimblest runners, to help him in catching goats; but he dis-

tanced and tired both the dog and the men, caught the goats, and brought them to us on his back.

"He told us, that his agility in pursuing a goat had once like to have cost him his life; he pursued it with so much eagerness, that he catched hold of it on the brink of a precipice, of which he was not aware, the bushes hiding it from him; so that he fell with the goat down the precipice, a great height, and was so stunned and bruised with the fall, that he narrowly escaped with his life; and, when he came to his senses, found the goat dead under him: He lay there about twenty-four hours, and was scarce able to crawl to his hut, which was about a mile distant, or to stir abroad again in ten days.

"He came at last to relish his meat well enough without salt or bread; and, in the season, had plenty of good turnips, which had been sowed there by Captain Dampier's men, and have now overspread some acres of ground. He had enough of good cabbage from the cabbage-trees, and seasoned his meat with the fruit of the pimento-trees, which is the same as Jamaica pepper, and smells deliciously. He found also a black pepper, called Malageta, which was very good to expel wind, and against griping in the guts.

"He soon wore out all his shoes and clothes by running in the woods; and, at last, being forced to shift without them, his feet became so hard, that he ran everywhere without difficulty; and it was some time before he could wear shoes after we found him; for, not being used to any so long, his feet swelled, when he came first to wear them again.

"After he had conquered his melancholy, he diverted himself sometimes with cutting his name on the trees, and the time of his being left, and continuance there. He was at first much pestered with cats and rats, that bred in great numbers, from some of each species which had got ashore from ships that put in there to wood and water. The rats gnawed his feet and clothes whilst asleep, which obliged him to cherish the cats with his goats' flesh, by which many of them became so tame, that they would lie about him in hundreds, and soon delivered him from the rats. He likewise tamed some kids; and, to divert himself, would now and then sing and dance with them and his cats: So that by the favour of Providence, and vigour of his youth, being now but thirty years old, he came, at last, to conquer all the inconveniences of his solitude, and to be very easy.

"When his clothes were worn out, he made himself a coat and a cap of goat-skins, which he stitched together with little thongs of the same, that he cut with his knife. He had no other needle but a nail; and when his knife was worn to the back, he made others, as well as he could, of some iron hoops that were left ashore, which he beat thin, and ground upon stones. Having some linen-cloth by him, he sewed him some shirts with a nail, and stitched them with the worsted of his old stockings, which he pulled out on purpose. He had his last shirt on when we found him in the island.

"At his first coming on board us, he had so much forgot his language, for want of use, that we could scarce understand him; for he seemed to speak his words by halves. We offered him a

dram; but he would not touch it, having drank nothing but water since his being there; and it was some time before he could relish our victuals. He could give us an account of no other product of the island than what we have mentioned, except some black plumbs, which are very good, but hard to come at; the trees which bear them growing on high mountains and rocks. Pimento-trees are plenty here; and we saw some of sixty feet high, and about two yards thick; and cotton-trees higher, and near four fathoms round in the stock. The climate is so good, that the trees and grass are verdant all the year round. The winter lasts no longer than June and July, and is not then severe, there being only a small frost, and a little hail; but sometimes great rains. The heat of the summer is equally moderate; and there is not much thunder, or tempestuous weather of any sort. He saw no venomous or savage creature on the island; nor any sort of beasts but goats, the first of which had been put ashore here, on purpose for a breed, by Juan Fernandez, a Spaniard, who settled there with some families, till the continent of Chili began to submit to the Spaniards; which, being more profitable, tempted them to quit this island, capable, however, of maintaining a good number of people, and being made so strong, that they could not be easily dislodged from thence."

We are indebted for the following additional particulars, respecting the life and fate of this singular character, to the research of the late A. Gibson Hunter, Esq., of Balskelly, in Scotland; who, we believe, was in possession of his will, and some other curious relics. Through this gentleman we learn, that Selkirk was born at Largo in Fife, in the year 1676, where he possessed some trifling landed property. When young, he manifested a violent and turbulent disposition, which was not probably improved during his buccaneering trips, but received a sudden and permanent check by his solitary confinement on this desolate island. He went mate with Captain Stradling, in the *Cinque-ports*, on a trading voyage round the world, in 1704. In the course of which, a difference arising betwixt him and his captain, the causes of which must now remain for ever unexplained, Selkirk, with all the hardihood of the seaman's character, desired to be landed on the island of Fernandez. Here he remained in perfect solitude, existing, as he has described himself, until discovered by Captain Rogers. Selkirk died on board a king's ship, the *Weymouth*, of which he was mate, in 1723; leaving his effects, by will, to sundry "loving female friends," with whom he had contracted intimacies in the course of his peregrinations. His chest, his gun, and his drinking cup, the last made of a cocoa nut shell, are, or were till lately, the property of his descendants at Largo.[1]

[1] [Mr. Hunter's communication, here quoted from, appeared in the *Scots Magazine*, September 1805. It contains a copy of the power of attorney made out by Alexander Selkirk, his will, and a facsimile of his signature.]

No. II

A true Relation of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veal, the next day after her death, to one Mrs. Bargrave, at Canterbury, the eighth of September, 1705, which Apparition recommends the perusal of Drelincourt's Book of Consolations against the fears of Death.

The Preface.—This relation is matter of fact, and attended with such circumstances as may induce any reasonable man to believe it. It was sent by a gentleman, a Justice of Peace at Maidstone, in Kent, and a very intelligent person, to his friend in London, as it is here worded; which discourse is attested by a very sober and understanding gentlewoman, a kinswoman of the said gentleman's, who lives in Canterbury, within a few doors of the house in which the within-named Mrs. Bargrave lives; who believes his kinswoman to be of so discerning a spirit as not to be put upon by any fallacy; and who positively assured him that the whole matter, as it is related and laid down, is really true, and what she herself had in the same words (as near as may be) from Mrs. Bargrave's own mouth, who she knows had no reason to invent and publish such a story, or any design to forge and tell a lie; being a woman of much honesty and virtue, and her whole life a course as it were of piety. The use which we ought to make of it is, to consider that there is a life to come after this, and a just God who will retribute to every one according to the deeds done in the body; and therefore to reflect upon our past course of life we have led in the world; that our time is short and uncertain; and that, if we would escape the punishment of the ungodly, and receive the reward of the righteous, which is the laying hold of eternal life, we ought, for the time to come, to return to God by a speedy repentance, ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well, to seek after God early, if haply he may be found of us, and lead such lives for the future, as may be well-pleasing in his sight.

A RELATION OF THE APPARITION OF MRS. VEAL

This thing is so rare in all its circumstances, and on so good authority, that my reading and conversation has not given me anything like it. It is fit to gratify the most ingenious and serious enquirer. Mrs. Bargrave is the person to whom Mrs. Veal appeared after her death; she is my intimate friend, and I can avouch for her reputation, for these last fifteen or sixteen years, on my own knowledge; and I can confirm the good character she had from her youth to the time of my acquaintance. Though since this relation, she is calumniated by some people that are friends to the brother of Mrs. Veal, who appeared; who think the relation of this appearance to be a reflection, and endeavour what they can to blast Mrs. Bargrave's reputation, and to laugh the story out of countenance. But by the circumstances thereof, and the cheerful disposition of Mrs. Bargrave, notwithstanding the ill usage of a very wicked husband,

there is not yet the least sign of dejection in her face; nor did I ever hear her let fall a desponding or murmuring expression; nay, not when actually under her husband's barbarity, which I have been a witness to, and several other persons of undoubted reputation.

Now, you must know Mrs. Veal was a maiden gentlewoman of about thirty years of age, and for some years last past had been troubled with fits, which were perceived coming on her by her going off from her discourse very abruptly to some impertinence. She was maintained by an only brother, and kept his house in Dover. She was a very pious woman, and her brother a very sober man to all appearance; but now he does all he can to null and quash the story. Mrs. Veal was intimately acquainted with Mrs. Bargrave from her childhood. Mrs. Veal's circumstances were then mean; her father did not take care of his children as he ought, so that they were exposed to hardships. And Mrs. Bargrave in those days had as unkind a father, though she wanted neither for food nor clothing; while Mrs. Veal wanted for both; insomuch that she would often say, "Mrs. Bargrave, you are not only the best, but the only, friend I have in the world; and no circumstance of life shall ever dissolve my friendship." They would often condole each other's adverse fortunes, and read together *Drelincourt upon Death*, and other good books; and so, like two Christian friends, they comforted each other under their sorrow.

Some time after, Mr. Veal's friends got him a place in the Custom house at Dover, which occasioned Mrs. Veal, by little and little, to fall off from her intimacy with Mrs. Bargrave, though there was never any such thing as a quarrel; but an indifferency came on by degrees, till at last Mrs. Bargrave had not seen her in two years and a half, though above a twelvemonth of the time Mrs. Bargrave hath been absent from Dover, and this last half year, has been in Canterbury about two months of the time, dwelling in a house of her own.

In this house, on the eighth of September, one thousand seven hundred and five, she was sitting alone in the forenoon, thinking over her unfortunate life, and arguing herself into a due resignation to Providence, though her condition seemed hard: "And," said she, "I have been provided for hitherto, and doubt not but I shall be still; and am well satisfied that my afflictions shall end when it is most fit for me." And then took up her sewing work, which she had no sooner done but she hears a knocking at the door; she went to see who was there, and this proved to be Mrs. Veal, her old friend, who was in a riding habit: At that moment of time, the clock struck twelve at noon.

"Madam," says Mrs. Bargrave, "I am surprised to see you, you have been so long a stranger;" but told her she was glad to see her, and offered to salute her, which Mrs. Veal complied with, till their lips almost touched, and then Mrs. Veal drew her hand across her own eyes, and said, "I am not very well," and so waived it. She told Mrs. Bargrave she was going a journey, and had a great mind to see her first. "But," says Mrs. Bargrave, "how can you take a journey alone? I am amazed at it, because I know you have a fond brother."—"Oh," says Mrs. Veal, "I gave my brother the

slip, and came away, because I had so great a desire to see you before I took my journey." So Mrs. Bargrave went in with her into another room within the first, and Mrs. Veal sat her down in an elbow-chair, in which Mrs. Bargrave was sitting when she heard Mrs. Veal knock. "Then," says Mrs. Veal, "my dear friend, I am come to renew our old friendship again, and beg your pardon for my breach of it; and if you can forgive me, you are the best of women."—"Oh," says Mrs. Bargrave, "do not mention such a thing; I have not had an uneasy thought about it; I can easily forgive it."—"What did you think of me?" said Mrs. Veal. Says Mrs. Bargrave, "I thought you were like the rest of the world, and that prosperity had made you forget yourself and me." Then Mrs. Veal reminded Mrs. Bargrave of the many friendly offices she did her in former days, and much of the conversation they had with each other in the times of their adversity; what books they read, and what comfort in particular they received from Drelincourt's Book of Death, which was the best, she said, on the subject ever wrote. She also mentioned Doctor Sherlock, and two Dutch books, which were translated, wrote upon death, and several others. But Drelincourt, she said, had the clearest notions of death, and of the future state, of any who had handled that subject. Then she asked Mrs. Bargrave whether she had Drelincourt? She said, "Yes." Says Mrs. Veal, "Fetch it." And so Mrs. Bargrave goes up stairs, and brings it down. Says Mrs. Veal, "Dear Mrs. Bargrave, if the eyes of our faith were as open as the eyes of our body, we should see numbers of angels about us for our guard. The notions we have of Heaven now, are nothing like what it is, as Drelincourt says; therefore be comforted under your afflictions, and believe that the Almighty has a particular regard to you, and that your afflictions are marks of God's favour; and when they have done the business they are sent for, they shall be removed from you. And believe me, my dear friend, believe what I say to you, one minute of future happiness will infinitely reward you for all your sufferings. For I can never believe" (and claps her hand upon her knee with great earnestness, which, indeed, ran through most of her discourse) "that ever God will suffer you to spend all your days in this afflicted state. But be assured that your afflictions shall leave you, or you them, in a short time." She spake in that pathetical and heavenly manner, that Mrs. Bargrave wept several times, she was so deeply affected with it.

Then Mrs. Veal mentioned Dr. Kenrick's *Ascetick*, at the end of which he gives an account of the lives of the primitive Christians. Their pattern she recommended to our imitation, and said, "Their conversation was not like this of our age. For now," says she, "there is nothing but vain frothy discourse, which is far different from theirs. Theirs was to edification, and to build one another up in faith, so that they were not as we are, nor are we as they were. But," said she, "we ought to do as they did; there was an hearty friendship among them; but where is it now to be found?" Says Mrs. Bargrave, "It is hard indeed to find a true friend in these days." Says Mrs. Veal, "Mr. Norris has a fine copy of verses, called Friendship in Perfection, which I wonderfully admire. Have

you seen the book?" says Mrs. Veal. "No," says Mrs. Bargrave; "but I have the verses of my own writing out."—"Have you?" says Mrs. Veal; "then fetch them;" which she did from above stairs, and offered them to Mrs. Veal to read, who refused, and waived the thing, saying, "holding down her head would make it ache;" and then desiring Mrs. Bargrave to read them to her, which she did. As they were admiring Friendship, Mrs. Veal said, "Dear Mrs. Bargrave, I shall love you for ever." In these verses there is twice used the word "Elysian."—"Ah!" says Mrs. Veal, "these poets have such names for Heaven!" She would often draw her hand across her own eyes, and say, "Mrs. Bargrave, do not you think I am mightily impaired by my fits?"—"No," says Mrs. Bargrave, "I think you look as well as ever I knew you."

After this discourse, which the apparition put in much finer words than Mrs. Bargrave said she could pretend to, and as much more than she can remember (for it cannot be thought that an hour and three quarters' conversation could all be retained, though the main of it she thinks she does), she said to Mrs. Bargrave she would have her write a letter to her brother, and tell him she would have him give rings to such and such; and that there was a purse of gold in her cabinet, and that she would have two broad pieces given to her cousin Watson.

Talking at this rate, Mrs. Bargrave thought that a fit was coming upon her, and so placed herself on a chair just before her knees, to keep her from falling to the ground, if her fits should occasion it; for the elbow-chair, she thought, would keep her from falling on either side. And to divert Mrs. Veal, as she thought, took hold of her gown sleeve several times, and commended it. Mrs. Veal told her it was a scoured silk, and newly made up. But for all this, Mrs. Veal persisted in her request, and told Mrs. Bargrave she must not deny her. And she would have her tell her brother all their conversation when she had opportunity. "Dear Mrs. Veal," says Mrs. Bargrave, "this seems so impertinent, that I cannot tell how to comply with it; and what a mortifying story will our conversation be to a young gentleman! Why," says Mrs. Bargrave, "it is much better, methinks, to do it yourself."—"No," says Mrs. Veal, "though it seems impertinent to you now, you will see more reasons for it hereafter." Mrs. Bargrave, then, to satisfy her importunity, was going to fetch a pen and ink, but Mrs. Veal said, "Let it alone now, but do it when I am gone; but you must be sure to do it;" which was one of the last things she enjoined her at parting, and so she promised her.

Then Mrs. Veal asked for Mrs. Bargrave's daughter; she said she was not at home; "but if you have a mind to see her," says Mrs. Bargrave, "I'll send for her."—"Do," says Mrs. Veal; on which she left her, and went to a neighbour's to see her; and by the time Mrs. Bargrave was returning, Mrs. Veal was got without the door, in the street, in the face of the beast-market, on a Saturday (which is market day), and stood ready to part as soon as Mrs. Bargrave came to her. She asked her why she was in such haste. She said she must be going, though perhaps she might not go her journey till Monday; and told Mrs. Bargrave she hoped she should

see her again at her cousin Watson's, before she went whither she was going. Then she said she would take her leave of her, and walked from Mrs. Bargrave, in her view till a turning interrupted the sight of her, which was three quarters after one in the afternoon.

Mrs. Veal died the 7th of September, at twelve o'clock at noon, of her fits, and had not above four hours' senses before her death, in which time she received the sacrament. The next day after Mrs. Veal's appearance, being Sunday, Mrs. Bargrave was mightily indisposed with a cold and a sore throat, that she could not go out that day; but on Monday morning she sends a person to Captain Watson's, to know if Mrs. Veal was there. They wondered at Mrs. Bargrave's enquiry, and sent her word she was not there, nor was expected. At this answer, Mrs. Bargrave told the maid she had certainly mistook the name, or made some blunder. And though she was ill, she put on her hood, and went herself to Captain Watson's, though she knew none of the family, to see if Mrs. Veal was there or not. They said they wondered at her asking, for that she had not been in town; they were sure, if she had, she would have been there. Says Mrs. Bargrave, "I am sure she was with me on Saturday almost two hours." They said it was impossible, for they must have seen her if she had. In comes Captain Watson, while they were in dispute, and said that Mrs. Veal was certainly dead, and the escutcheons were making. This strangely surprised Mrs. Bargrave, when she sent to the person immediately who had the care of them, and found it true. Then she related the whole story to Captain Watson's family; and what gown she had on, and how striped; and that Mrs. Veal told her that it was scoured. Then Mrs. Watson cried out, "You have seen her indeed, for none knew, but Mrs. Veal and myself, that the gown was scoured." And Mrs. Watson owned that she described the gown exactly; "for," said she, "I helped her to make it up." This Mrs. Watson blazed all about the town, and avouched the demonstration of the truth of Mrs. Bargrave's seeing Mrs. Veal's apparition. And Captain Watson carried two gentlemen immediately to Mrs. Bargrave's house, to hear the relation from her own mouth. And when it spread so fast, that gentlemen, and persons of quality, the judicious and sceptical part of the world, flocked in upon her, it at last became such a task, that she was forced to go out of the way; for they were in general extremely satisfied of the truth of the thing, and plainly saw that Mrs. Bargrave was no hypochondriac, for she always appears with such a cheerful air, and pleasing mien, that she has gained the favour and esteem of all the gentry: and it is thought a great favour if they can but get the relation from her own mouth. I should have told you before, that Mrs. Veal told Mrs. Bargrave that her sister and brother-in-law were just come down from London to see her. Says Mrs. Bargrave, "How came you to order matters so strangely?"—"It could not be helped," said Mrs. Veal. And her brother and sister did come to see her, and entered the town of Dover just as Mrs. Veal was expiring. Mrs. Bargrave asked her whether she would drink some tea. Says Mrs. Veal, "I do not care if I do; but I'll warrant you this mad fellow" (meaning Mrs. Bargrave's husband) "has broke all your

trinkets."—"But," says Mrs. Bargrave, "I'll get something to drink in for all that;" but Mrs. Veal waived it, and said, "It is no matter; let it alone:" and so it passed.

All the time I sate with Mrs. Bargrave, which was some hours, she recollected fresh sayings of Mrs. Veal. And one material thing more she told Mrs. Bargrave, that old Mr. Bretton allowed Mrs. Veal ten pounds a-year, which was a secret, and unknown to Mrs. Bargrave till Mrs. Veal told her.

Mrs. Bargrave never varies in her story, which puzzles those who doubt of the truth, or are unwilling to believe it. A servant in the neighbour's yard adjoining to Mrs. Bargrave's house heard her talking to somebody an hour of the time Mrs. Veal was with her. Mrs. Bargrave went out to her next neighbour's the very moment she parted with Mrs. Veal, and told her what ravishing conversation she had with an old friend, and told the whole of it. Drelincourt's Book of Death is, since this happened, bought up strangely. And it is to be observed, that, notwithstanding all the trouble and fatigue Mrs. Bargrave has undergone upon this account, she never took the value of a farthing, nor suffered her daughter to take anything of any body, and therefore can have no interest in telling the story.

But Mr. Veal does what he can to stifle the matter, and said he would see Mrs. Bargrave; but yet it is certain matter of fact that he has been at Captain Watson's since the death of his sister, and yet never went near Mrs. Bargrave; and some of his friends report her to be a liar, and that she knew of Mr. Bretton's ten pounds a-year. But the person who pretends to say so, has the reputation to be a notorious liar among persons whom I know to be of undoubted credit. Now, Mr. Veal is more of a gentleman than to say she lies; but says a bad husband has crazed her; but she needs only present herself, and it will effectually confute that pretence. Mr. Veal says he asked his sister on her death-bed whether she had a mind to dispose of anything? And she said no. Now, the things which Mrs. Veal's apparition would have disposed of, were so trifling, and nothing of justice aimed at in the disposal, that the design of it appears to me to be only in order to make Mrs. Bargrave so to demonstrate the truth of her appearance, as to satisfy the world of the reality thereof, as to what she had seen and heard; and to secure her reputation among the reasonable and understanding part of mankind. And then again, Mr. Veal owns that there was a purse of gold; but it was not found in her cabinet, but in a comb-box. This looks improbable; for that Mrs. Watson owned that Mrs. Veal was so very careful of the key of her cabinet that she would trust nobody with it; and if so, no doubt she would not trust her gold out of it. And Mrs. Veal's often drawing her hands over her eyes, and asking Mrs. Bargrave, whether her fits had not impaired her, looks to me, as if she did it on purpose to remind Mrs. Bargrave of her fits, to prepare her not to think it strange that she should put her upon writing to her brother, to dispose of rings and gold, which looked so much like a dying person's request; and it took accordingly with Mrs. Bargrave as the effect of her fits coming upon her, and was one of the many instances of her wonderful love

to her and care of her, that she should not be affrighted, which, indeed, appears in her whole management, particularly in her coming to her in the day-time, waiving the salutation, and when she was alone; and then the manner of her parting, to prevent a second attempt to salute her.

Now, why Mr. Veal should think this relation a reflection (as it is plain he does by his endeavouring to stifle it), I cannot imagine; because the generality believe her to be a good spirit, her discourse was so heavenly. Her two great errands were, to comfort Mrs. Bargrave in her affliction, and to ask her forgiveness for her breach of friendship, and with a pious discourse to encourage her. So that, after all, to suppose that Mrs. Bargrave could hatch such an invention as this from Friday noon till Saturday noon (supposing that she knew of Mrs. Veal's death the very first moment), without jumbling circumstances, and without any interest too; she must be more witty, fortunate, and wicked too, than any indifferent person, I dare say, will allow. I asked Mrs. Bargrave several times if she was sure she felt the gown? She answered modestly, "If my senses be to be relied on, I am sure of it." I asked her if she heard a sound when she clapped her hands upon her knee? She said she did not remember she did, but said she appeared to be as much a substance as I did who talked with her. "And I may," said she, "be as soon persuaded that your apparition is talking to me now, as that I did not really see her; for I was under no manner of fear, and received her as a friend, and parted with her as such. I would not," says she, "give one farthing to make any one believe it; I have no interest in it; nothing but trouble is entailed upon me for a long time, for aught I know; and had it not come to light by accident, it would never have been made public." But now she says she will make her own private use of it, and keep herself out of the way as much as she can; and so she has done since. She says she had a gentleman who came thirty miles to her to hear the relation; and that she had told it to a room full of people at the time. Several particular gentlemen have had the story from Mrs. Bargrave's own mouth.

This thing has very much affected me, and I am as well satisfied as I am of the best grounded matter of fact. And why we should dispute matter of fact, because we cannot solve things of which we can have no certain or demonstrative notions, seems strange to me; Mrs. Bargrave's authority and sincerity alone would have been undoubted in any other case.

INDEX

ff. after an entry implies that there are references to the same subject on at least two immediately succeeding pages.

Academie, The French, 267
Achilles, 278
Addison, Joseph (1672-1719), 298, 386
Adolphus, Gustavus, 368, 369
Æschylus, 57
Ainsworth's *Latin Dictionary*, 57
Akenside, Dr. Mark (1721-1770), 79
Alfieri, Count Vittorio (1749-1803), 181
Allen, Ralph (1694-1764), 62, 63, 70
American Colonies, 166
Amphytrion, 89
Anderson, Dr. Robert (1750-1830), 82; *Life of Smollett*, 71, 73, 90, 100, 119
André, John (1751-1780), 340
Anne, Queen, 119, 336, 356, 360 ff.
Annesley, Mr., a claimant to the property of Anglesea, 80
Anstey, Christopher (1724-1805), 340; *New Bath Guide*, 98
Ariosto, Ludovico (1474-1533), 262; *Orlando Furioso*, 229
Aristarchus, 119
Aristophanes, *The Clouds*, 132
Aristotle, 386
Austen, Jane (1775-1817), 334
Avellaneda, *Continuation of Don Quixote*, 246

Bage, Robert (1728-1801), 276-291; *Barham Downs*, 276, 278, 280; *Fair Syrian, The*, 277, 278, 280, 282; *Hermsprong, or Man as he is not*, 278; *James Wallace*, 278; *Man as he is*, 278; *Mount Henneth*, 278, 280
Ballantyne, John, 353
Baltimore, Lord, 23
Bannister, Jack, actor (1760-1836), 123
Barber, Francis, Dr. Johnson's negro servant, 94, 95
Barclay, John (1582-1621), *Argenis*, 204
Barrett, Dr., 11
Barwell, Mrs., 211
Bathurst, Dr., *Adventures of a Half-penny*, 270
Bath Waters, the, 69, 82, 83, 322
Beaumont and Fletcher, 247
Beaumont, Rear-Admiral, 360
Belianis, Don, the hero of an old romance of chivalry, 188
Benbow, Admiral, 111
Bennet, Mrs., 334
Bentinck, Ld. Edward, 140
Bentley, Dr. Richard (1662-1742), 119, 120, 122, 131
Bentley, Joanna (the Phœbe of Byron's pastoral), married Denison Cumberland, 119
Bentley, Rich., son of Dr. Bentley, 131, 132, 196; *The Wishes*, 131, 196
Bernard, Dr., Dean of Derry, 152
Bickerstaff, Isaac (really a *nom-de-plume*), 123, 125; *Love in a Village*, 123
Bochard, Père, a Jesuit, 245
Boiardo, Matteo Maria (1434?-1494), *Orlando Inamorato*, 262
Boileau, Nicolas (1636-1711), 254
Bonaparte, Napoleon (1769-1821), 233
Book of Martyrs, 385
Boothby, Sir Brooke, *Fables and Satires*, 338
Boscawen, Admiral Ed., "old Dreadnought," 111
Boswell, James (1740-1795), 68, 150, 152, 162, 165, 169
Botanic Garden, a poem, 345
Bouillion, Duchess de, 248
Bradshaigh, Lady, 4, 12, 14, 26, 30, 33, 34, 38
Bradshaigh, Sir Roger, of Haigh, in Lancashire, 12
Brianton, Robert, 146
Brigden, Mrs., daughter of Richardson, 205
British Gallery of Contemporary Portraits, The, 291

British Magazine or Monthly Repository, The, 92
Briton, The, a weekly paper, 94, 95
Brown, Dr., *Barbarossa*, 90
Brown, Sir Thomas (1605 - 1682), 169
Brydges, Sir Samuel Egerton (1762-1837), 309
Buffon, George Louis Leclerc, Comte de (1707-1788), 161, 386
Bunyan, John (1628-1688), 31, 161
Burke, Edmund (1729-1797), 119, 130, 149, 151, 152, 226
Burney, Fanny (1752-1840), Madam D'Arblay, *q.v.*, 45
Burton, Dr. Richard, *Treatise on Midwifery*, 175, 186
Burton, Robert (1577 - 1640), *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 183, 184
Bute, Lord, 94, 95, 98, 122, 149
Byron, Lord (1788-1824), 11, 37, 70, 166, 182; *Corsair, The*, 226; *Don Juan*, 235, 380; *Giaour, The*, 226, 227

Calderon de la Barca, Pedro (1600-1681), 247
Calprenede, Gautier des Costes de la (1610-1663), 188
Campbell, Hon. Alex. Hume, 112, 113
Campbell, Thomas (1777 - 1844), *Specimens of the British Poets*, 109, 111, 145 ff., 149
Canning, Elizabeth (1734-1773), 67
Causes Célèbres, Les, 320
Censura Literaria, 309, 323
Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de, 51, 57, 63, 80, 85, 86, 92, 98, 105, 107, 246, 252, 254, 258, 261; *Don Quixote*, 52, 92, 258, 331; *Riconete and Cortadillo*, 257
Chalmers, Alex., *Biographical Dictionary*, 269
Charles I., 211
Charles II., 188, 208
Chantrey, Sir Francis Legatt, 257
Chatham, Lord, 98
Chatterton, 196
Chesterfield, Lord, 112
Choiseul, Duc de (1719-1785), 179
Christ Church, Oxford, 184
Churchill, Charles (1731-1764), 99, 104, 165; *Rosciad, The*, 104
Cibber, Colley (1671-1757), 10, 26
Claude (Gellée), called "Le Lorrain," 50, 222
Cleopatra, 188
Clive, The Hon. Mr. Baron, 174
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor (1772-1834), 333
College, the Protestant Joiner, 1
Collins, William (1721-1759), 347
Condamine, M. de la, 267
Congreve, William (1670-1729), 48
Contarine, Rev. Thomas, 144 ff.
Contarini of Venice, The, 145
Conway, Henry Seymour (1721-1795), 196
Cooke [Cook], Captain (1728-1779), 39, 340
Correlli (Devil's Sonata), 380
Coulanges, Mme de, 324
Covent Garden Theatre, 76, 103, 124, 153, 294
Cowper, William (1731-1800), 273, 322
Cowper's version of the *Iliad*, 347
Crabbe's poems, 331
Craddock (Cradock), Miss Charlotte, married Henry Fielding, 54
Crassa Minerva, 374
Crebillon, Claude Prosper Jolyot de (1707-1777), 182
Critical Review, The, 87, 88, 91, 104, 116 ff.
Cromwell, Richard (1626-1712), 373
Crowe, Mr., *Lewesdone Hill*, 340
Cruikshanks, Professor, 82
Culloden, field of, 59
Cumberland, Charles, son of Richard Cumberland, 140
Cumberland, Denison, father of Richard Cumberland, 121
Cumberland, Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Cumberland, married Lord Ed. Bentinck, 140
Cumberland, Frances Marianne, daughter of Richard Cumberland, 140
Cumberland, Richard (1732-1811), 119 - 143, 152; *Anecdotes of Eminent Painters in Spain*, 130; *Arabs, The*, 132; *Arundel*, 137, 139; *Banishment of Cicero, The*, 121, 122; *Battle of Hastings*, 125; *Brothers, The*, 124, 125, 133; *Calvary*, a poem, 134; *Calypso*, 125; *Carmelite, The*, 133; Catalogue of his Works, 142, 143; *Catalogue of Pictures at the Escurial*, 130; *Choleric Man, The*, 125; *Dedication to Detraction*, 125; *Elegy in a Churchyard*, 120; *Exodiad, The*, in collaboration with Sir J. B. Burgess, 134; *Fashionable Lover, The*, 125; *First Love*, 133; *Henry*, 137 ff.; *Jew, The*, 84, 132; *John de Lancaster*,

137; *Memoirs*, 119, 128, 132, 137, 140, 152, 161; Nicolas Pedrosa, story of, 130; *Retrospection*, 140; *Summer's Tale, The*, 123; *Walloons, The*, 132; *West Indian*, 124, 125, 133; *Wheel of Fortune, The*, 132, 133
Cumberland, Sophia, daughter of Richard Cumberland, married William Badcock, 140
Cumberland, William, son of Richard Cumberland, 140
Cunningham, Barbara, afterwards Mrs. Smollett, mother of Tobias Smollett, 71
Cunningham, Jane,, afterwards Mrs. Telfer, *q.v.*, 71
Cunningham, Mr., of Gilbertfield, 71
Cyrus of Faramond, 208

D'Alembert (Jean le Rond) (1717-1783), 29, 41
Dampier, Captain, 365, 366, 387, 389
Danchel, employed Le Sage in translating, 246
Dancourt, a dramatist, 255
D'Arblay, Mme (1752-1840), 334. *See also* Burney, Fanny
D'Arnaud, M., 205
Darwin, Dr. Erasmus (1731-1802), 277, 336 ff., 341 ff.
Darwin, Mrs., wife of Dr. Darwin, 338
D'Aubigne, *Baron de Fæneste*, 183
D'Avenant, Sir William (1606-1668), 329
Day, Thomas (1748-1789), 338, 344; *Sandford and Merton*, 338, 344
Deffand, Mme, 193, 194, 196
De Foe, Daniel (1661?-1731), 42, 210, 259, 353-397; *An Account of Commerce*, 366; *An Appeal to Honour and Justice*, 355, 363; *An Argument to prove that a standing Army*, etc., 357; *An Essay on the history and reality of Apparitions*, 372; *A Treatise of Spirits*, 372; *Caledonia*, 361, 365; *Double Welcome to the Duke of Marlborough*, 361; *Dumb Philosopher, The*, 364; *English Tradesman*, 366; *Fortunate Mistress*, 364; *History of Addresses, The*, 373; *History of Mother Ross* (Mrs. Christian Davis), 367; *History of the Church of Scotland*, 373; *History of the Great Plague in London*, 370, 374; *History of the Union*, 361, 373; *Hymn to the Gallows*, 359; *Hymn to the Pillory*, 359; *Hymn to Victory*, 361; *Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, 353, 357, 363, 364, 366, 370, 372 ff., 382, 384 ff.; *Life and Piracies of Captain Singleton, The*, 365; *Life of Duncan Campbell*, 364, 372; *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, 368, 370; *Memoirs of Captain Singleton*, 385; *Moll Flanders*, 367, 382; *More Reformation*, 354; *New Voyage round the World*, 364, 366; *Original Power of the Collective Body of the People of England, The*, 357; *Remarkable Life of Colonel Jack*, 364, 367, 382; *Review, The*, 359, 361 ff., 365; *Roxana*, 367; *Scandal Club*, 360; *Serious Reflections during the Life of Robinson Crusoe*, etc., 364, 371, 372; *Shortest Way with the Dissenters, The*, 357, 358; *Spy on the Conjurer*, 372; *Storm, The*, 361; *Travels in North and South Britain*, 373; *True-born Englishman*, 356, 357, 359; *True History of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veal, The*, 377, 391; *Voyages and Piracies of Captain Singleton*, 366; *What if the Pretender should come?* 362; *What if the Queen should die?* 362
De la Foire, 250 ff.
Demophon, the philosopher, in Lucian, 162
Denbigh, William, Earl of, 36, 46
Dennis, John (1657-1734), 116
Devijeher, Colonel, 171
De Witt, Cornelius, 211
De Witt, John, 211
Dialogues of the Chimneys of Madrid, an addition to *Le Diable Boiteux*, 256
Diderot, Denis (1713-1784), 29, 283
Dilly, Mr., publisher, of the Poultry, 204
D'Israeli, Benjamin, 19
D'Israeli, Isaac, 40, 122; *Calamities of Authors, passim; Curiosities of Literature*, 29, 30, 40; *Quarrels of Authors*, 68
Ditcher, Mr., married Mary Richardson, 5
Doddington, Bubb, afterwards Lord Melcombe (1691-1762), 121, 122, 135
Dodsley's Miscellany, 351
Dominique, friend of Le Sage, 250
Donellan, Mrs., 9

Dorset, Mrs., sister of Charlotte Smith, 303, 333; *The Peacock at Home*, etc., 303
Douglas, 133, 140
Douglas, Dr., 152
Drawcansir, Sir Alexander, 68
Drelincourt, Rev. Charles, *Christian's Defence against the fear of Death*, etc., 377, 379, 381, 392
Drury Lane Theatre, 133, 134
Dryden, John (1631-1700), 44, 49, 222, 336, 356; *Absalom and Achitophel*, 357; *Annus Mirabilis*, 370
Dunlop, John Colin (*c.* 1785-1842), *History of Fiction*, 234, 244

East India Company, 149
Eden, Sir Frederic Morton, 62; *State of the Poor, or a History of the Labouring Classes in England, The*, 62
Edgeworth, Maria (1767-1849), 52, 334; *Castle Rackrent*, 376; *Inheritance*, 334; *Marriage*, 334
Edgeworth, Richard E., father of Maria Edgeworth, 338, 344
Edinburgh Review, The, 20, 135, 203, 241
Edwards, Bryan (1743-1800), *History of the West Indies*, 314
Edwards, Mr., *Canons of Criticism*, 9
Elizabeth, Queen, 50, 188, 239, 330
Ellis, George (1753-1815), 265
Epictetus, 288
Epicurus, 288
Espinella, Vincentio (1551-1634),
Euripides, 29; Choruses of, 131
European Magazine, 112
Evelyn, John (1620-1706), 370

Fable of the Little Fishes, 152
Featherstone, Rev. Mr., a relation of Sterne's mother, 171
Fénélon, François de Salignac de la Mothe (1651-1715), *Telemachus*, 350
Ferriar, Dr. (of Manchester), 183, 186, 187; *Illustrations of Sterne's Writings*, 184
Fiddleback, Goldsmith's horse, 146
Fielding, General Edmund father of Henry Fielding, 46, 47
Fielding, Henry (1707-1754), 11, 22, 39, 40, 44, 45; 46-70; 77, 80, 82, 100, 105, 106, 108 ff., 137 ff., 153, 189, 209, 214, 227, 229, 251, 286, 296; *Amelia*, 67, 68, 109; *Champion, The*, 59; *Charge to the Grand Jury of Middlesex*, 62; *Clarissa*, 7 ff., 18, 22, 26, 29 ff., 35, 43, 58, 105; *Covent Garden Journal, The*, 68; Crown Law, a MS. on, 62; *Enquiry into the Increase of Thieves and Robbers*, 61, 62; *Fathers, The*, 58; *Historical Register, The*, 53; *Intriguing Chamber-Maid, The*, a farce, 48; *Jacobite Journal, The* (or *Jacobites'*), 58 ff.; *Jonathan Wild the Great, The History of*, 59, 109, 110; *Joseph Andrews*, 22; 51, 56 ff 110; *Joseph Andrews*, 22, 51, 56 ff., 63, 109; *Journey from this World to the Next, The*, in *Miscellanies*, 59; *Journey to Lisbon*, 70; *Miscellanies*, 59; *Miser, The*, 48; *Mock Doctor, The*, a farce, 48; *Pasquin*, 53; *Sir Charles Grandison*, 58, 105; *Tom Jones*, 39, 40, 52, 57, 62, 65, 67, 77, 107, 109, 153; *Tom Thumb*, a mock tragedy, 48, 153; *Tracts concerning Law Trials*, 62; *True Patriot, The*, 59, 60; *Virgin Unmasqued, The*, 56; *Wedding Day, The*, 58, 59
Fielding, Sarah, *David Simple*, 47
Fletcher, John (1579 - 1625), 243; *Little French Lawyer, The*, 124; *Nice Valour, The*, 243
Fleur, La, valet to Laurence Sterne, 178 ff.
Foe, James, father of Daniel de Foe, 353, 354
Foote, Samuel (1720-1777), 153; *The Devil upon two Sticks in London*, 148
Fordhook, Fielding's home at, 69
Foville, Chevalier de, 322
Francisque, one of Le Sage's employers, 250, 251
Froissart, Jean (1333?-1419), 192, 208
Fuselier, friend of Le Sage, 250, 251

Galt, John (1779-1839), *Annals of the Parish, The*, 376; *Provost, The*, 376
Garrick, David (1717-1779), 59, 74, 89, 90, 121, 122, 125, 126, 135, 149, 151, 152, 164, 247, 294, 320, 336
Garrick, original of Marmozet in *Roderick Random*, 78
Gay, John (1685-1732), 56; *Beggar's Opera*, 54, 66, 251; *Shepherd's Week*, 22
General Evening Post, The, 339

Gentleman's Magazine, 366
George I., 204
George III., 94
Germain, Lord George, afterwards Lord Sackville, 126
Glass [Glasse], Hannah, name assumed by Dr. John Hill (1716-1775), 161
Godolphin, Lord, 360 ff.
Goldoni, Carlo (1707-1793), 252
Goldsmith, Dr. Henry, brother to Oliver Goldsmith, 151
Goldsmith, Oliver (1728-1774), 119, 125, 144-161, 168, 177; *Abridgment of the History of England*, 156; *Abridgment of the History of Rome*, 156; *Animated Nature*, 161; *Citizen of the World*, 150; *Deserted Village*, 154, 155; *Essay on Polite Literature in Europe*, 148, 149; *Good-Natured Man*, 153; *History of the Earth and Animated Nature*, 157; *History of the Haunch of Venison*, 159; *Letters on the History of England*, 153; *Retaliation*, 151, 152; *Selections of English Poetry*, 153; *She Stoops to Conquer*, 156; *Traveller*, 151, 155, 159; *Vicar of Wakefield*, 150, 151, 159 ff., 301; *White Mice*, 159
Goldsmith, Life of Dr., 156
Goldsmith, Rev. Charles, father of Oliver Goldsmith, 144
Good Man, The, original title of *Sir Charles Grandison*, 30
Gordon, John, surgeon, 72, 73, 77
Gordon, Lord George (Gordon Riot), 128
Gordon, Peter, 84, 112, 115
Graham, Mr., of Gartmore, 103
Graham, Rev. John of Lifford, 144
Graham, Robert, of Gartmore, 75
Grainger, Dr., 116 ff.; *Ode to Solitude*, 87; *Tibullus, Translation of*, 117
Grandison, Sir Charles, an Irish edition of, 38
Gray, Thomas (1716-1771), 189, 193, 256, 347; *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, 121
Greek Lexicon, Hederic's, 57
Guevara, Luez Valez de, 270; *El Diablo Cojuelo*, 252
Gusto Picaresco, 367
Guzman d'Alfarache, 258

Hakluytt, Richard (1552?-1616), *Hackluyt's Voyages*, 366
Halifax, Dr., Bishop of Gloucester, 211
Halifax, Dr., Physician to the King, 211
Halifax, Marquis of, 121 ff., 135, 137, 173
Hamilton, Lord William, 80
Hamilton, William Gerard, 122
Harley, Sir Robert (1661-1724), 360, 362, 364, 373
Hawes, Francis, one of the South-Sea Directors, 80
Hawkins, Miss, *Anecdotes*, 320
Hayley, Wm. (1745-1820), 316, 322, 340; *Life of Cowper*, 278; *Memoirs*, 320
Hederic's *Greek Lexicon*, 57
Helvetius, Claude Adrien (1715-1771), 255
Henry IV. of France, 255
Henry VII., 280
Hill, Aaron (1685-1750), 9, 11, 16
History of Amadis, The, 262
History of Don Alphonzo Blas de Lirias, The, 262
History of Leonora in *Joseph Andrews*, 63
Hodson, Daniel, 149
Hogarth, William (1697-1764), 65
Holland, Lord Henry (1788-1873), 274
Home, Mr., *Douglas*, a tragedy, 118
Homer, 29, 70, 347
Horace, 260, 270, 343
Hume, David (1711-1776), 153, 295, 302; *History of England*, 93
Hunter, Elizabeth, afterwards Mrs. Seward, 335
Hutton, Catherine, 276, 281, 282
Hutton, William, bookseller of Birmingham, 276, 278, 282; *Dissertation on Juries*, 280; *History of Derby*, 280

Inchbald, Mrs., *Frankenstein*, 334
Israelites, or the Pampered Nabob, The, 103

Jacques, Sir Roger, ancestor of Laurence Sterne, 171
James I., 34
Jarvis (Jervas, Charles, 1675-1739), 85, 86
Jebb, Dr. Samuel, 211
Jesuits, The, 275
Jesus College, Cambridge, 173, 175
Job, 33
Johnson, Dr. Samuel (1709-1784), 6 ff., 30, 37, 38 ff., 65, 66, 68, 94,

102, 119, 125, 145, 149, 150 ff., 155 ff., 162-169, 177, 181, 184, 202, 268, 270, 335 ff., 339; *Dictionary*, 8; *Falkland Islands*, 165; *False Alarm, The*, 165; *Father Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia, Translation of*, 163; *Idler, The*, 165; *Irene*, a tragedy, 164; *Journey to the Hebrides*, 165; *Life of Rowe*, 37; *Lives of the British Poets, The*, 166; *London*, a satire, in imitation of Juvenal, 164; *Rambler, The*, 38, 39, 165; *Rasselas*, 162, 165, 168; *Shakespeare*, published by subscription, 165; *Taxation no Tyranny*, 166; *Vanity of Human Wishes*, 164, 169
Johnson, Michael, father of Samuel Johnson, 163
Johnstone, Charles (1719?-1800), 268-276; *Chrysal, or the Adventures of a Guinea*, 268 ff., 274 ff.; *History of Arsaces, The*, a political romance, 269; *History of John Juniper, Esq., The*, a romance of low life, 269; *Pilgrim, The*, 269; *Reverie, The*, a satire, 269
Johnstone, Jack (Irish Johnstone), 124
Jones, Tom, an abridgment of, by De la Place, 65
Jonson, Ben (1573-1637), 90; *Every Man out of his Humour*, 249
Juvenal, 270, 288

Kelley, Michael, *Reminiscences*, 134
Kemble, John Phillip (1721-1802), 50, 132, 133, 162
Kemble, Memoirs of, 133
King's Bench, Court of, 93, 112
Klopstock, F. G. (1724-1803), 134
Knowles, Admiral, 87, 88, 93, 95
Knox, Dr. Vicesimus (1752-1821), *Essays*, 65

Lady's Magazine, 305
Lake of Idleness, Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, 285
Lascelles, Miss Anne, afterwards Mrs. Tobias Smollett, 76
Lazarillo de Tormes, 257, 258
Leake, Miss, sister of James (Richardson's second wife), 4
Le Sage, Abbe, a canon of the Cathedral of Boulogne, 265, 266
Le Sage, Alain Rene (1668-1747), 48, 51, 52, 63, 77, 80, 130, 189, 229, 245-267, 268; *Adventures of the Chevalier de Beauchene*, 262; *Bachelor of Salamanca, The*, 263; Collection of Anecdotes and Witticisms, 263; *Crispin rival de son Maître*, 247, 248; *Diable Boiteux*, 52, 252 ff., 258, 260, 263, 266, 268, 269; *Don Cæsar Ursin*, translated from original of Calderon, 247, 248; *Don Felix de Mendoce*, translated from Lope de Vega, 247; *Gil Blas*, 52, 65, 256 ff., 265, 268; *Guzman d'Alfarache*, a translation, or abridgment of, 262; *History of Vanille Gonzales*, translation of, 263; *La Tontine*, 249; *Le Point d'Honneur*, 52, 247; *Le Traître Puni*, translated from original of Don Francisco de Rojas, 247; *Letters of Aristenetus*, translation of the, 246; *Théâtre*, 247; *Turcaret, Critique de*, 52, 248 ff., 252, 264, 266; *Valise Trouvée, La*, 263
Leven, Earl of, 342
Lewis, Matthew Gregory (Monk Lewis), *The Monk*, 230
Lincoln Cathedral, 240
Literary Club, The, commonly called The Club, 151, 152
Livy, 36, 105
London Review, The, 135, 136, 143
Louis XIV., 208
Lounger, The, 301
Lovelace, Richard (1618-1658), 359
Lowth, Robert (1710-1787), 125
Lucian, 288
Lyttleton, Lord, 60, 62, 74, 82, 153; *Monody on the Death of his Wife*, 81
Lyttleton, Lord, original of Sheerwit in *Roderick Random*, 78

MacAulay, Sir Aulay, 71
Mackenzie, Dr. Joshua, father of Hy. Mackenzie, *q.v.*, 291
Mackenzie, Henry (1745-1831), 45, 291-302; *Account of the Life and Writings of Home*, 294, 295; *An Account of the Proceedings of the Parliament of* 1784, 294; *Julia de Roubigné*, 299 ff., *La Roche*, 297; *Man of Feeling, The*, 291, 292, 296, 298, 299; *Prince of Tunis, The*, 294; *Spanish Father, The*, 294; *White Hypocrite, The*, 294; *Works of John Home, Esq., The*, 294
Malone, Edmund (1741-1812), 68
Maltôtiers, 249
Maria of Moulines, 178

Mary, Queen of Scots, 239, 240
Mason, William (1724-1797), 347; *Elfrida*, 121
Maturin, Rev. Charles, 224, 233; *The Family of Montorio*, 224
Mears, Captain, 269, 275
Mecænas, 121
Milton, 216, 328, 336, 345, 346; *L'Allegro*, 336
Mirror of Knighthood, The, 188
Mirror, The, 301
Mitford, John, *Life and Works of Gray*, 189
Moffat and Haggart, Memoirs of Messrs., 66
Molière, 52, 248, 250, 255
Monmouth, Duke of, 1, 354, 358
Montague, George, 61
Montague, Lady Mary Wortley (1690-1762), 35 ff., 47; *Letters*, 35; *Works*, 36, 37
Montague, Mrs. Elizabeth, 212
Monthly Magazine, 324
Monthly Review, 87, 118, 173
Moore, Dr., 86, 90, 91, 118; *Life of Smollett*, 71, 73, 74, 97, 105
Moore, Edward (1712-1757), *The Gamester*, 90
Moore, T., *Twopenny Postbag*, 263
Morton, Thomas, 45
Moses, 29
Motteux, P. A. (1660-1718), 85, 86
Mount Edgecomb, Lord, 268, 275
Murillo, Bartolomé Esteban (1617-1682), 257, 367

Neck or Nothing, from Le Sage's *Crispin rival de son Maître*, 247
Newberry, John, publisher of St. Paul's Churchyard, 150, 151
Newgate Calendar, 385
Nichol's *Literary Anecdotes, passim*
Nicholson, Houston Stewart, 103
Ninon de L'Enclos, 255
Norris, *Poem on Friendship, or Friendship in Perfection*, 379, 393
North Briton, The, conducted by John Wilkes, 94
Northumberland, Earl of, 149

Observator, The, published by Tutchin, 354
Observer, 130 ff.
Occasional Critic, The, 116
Oldham, John (1653-1683), 357
Old Man of the Hill, an episode in *Tom Jones*, 63
Oldmixon, J., *Works*, 355
Oliver, Rev. Mr., 47
Olivier de la Marche, 208
Onslow, Arthur, Speaker of the House of Commons (1691-1768), 4, 8
Otway, Thomas, 44
Oviedo, 260

Pamela in High Life, 22
Pantheon, The, 96
Parc, Sieur Moulinet de, *History of Francion*, 259
Parry (Sir Wm. Ed., Arctic navigator), 39
Pembroke College, Oxford, 163
Pepys, Samuel (1633-1703), 370
Pepys, Samuel (1633-1703), 370; *Memoirs*, 119
Percy, Thomas (1729-1811), 119
Perreau, Daniel, 125
Perreau, Robert, 125
Petronius, 288
Philips, Ambrose (1675?-1749), 56
Phillips, Captain, 172
Pilkington, Lætitia, 10
Pilkington's Memoirs, Mrs., 10
Piozzi, Mrs., formerly Mrs. Thrale, *q.v.*, 8, 150, 212
Piron, Alexis (1689-1773), 251; *Arlequin Deucalion*, 251
Pitt, William (1759-1806), 280, 294
Plato, 288
Plays upon the Passions, 224
Pliny, 386
Plutarch, 106, 208
Plutarch's Lives, 204
Poet's Corner, 140
Pope, Alexander (1688-1744), 11, 20, 62, 63, 97, 118, 336, 347, 359; *Dunciad*, 82; *Homer*, 351; *Iliad*, 347; *Odyssey*, 351
Port Antonio, 172
Porter, Mrs. Lucy, daughter-in-law of Dr. Johnson, 337, 339
Porter, Mr., son-in-law to Dr. Johnson, 337, 338
Portland, Duke of, 140
Prevost, Abbé, *Manon L'Escaut*, 317
Prior, Matthew (1664-1721), 336
Prior, Sir James (1790-1869), *Life of Burke*, 144; *Memoirs of Goldsmith*, 144
Psalms, The, 336
Public Advertiser, The, 319
Public Characters, 310, 312, 314 ff., 323, 327
Purchas, Rev. Samuel (1577-1628), *Purchas's Pilgrims*, 366
Pursuits of Literature, The, 229

Quakers, 286, 289
Quarterly Review, 52, 66, 97, 135, 153, 201, 203, 224, 233, 248, 260, 286, 295, 338, 344
Quevedo, *Paul the Sharper*, 257
Quin, James (1693-1766), actor

Rabelais, François (1483-1553), 177, 182, 183; *Moyen de Parvenir*, 183
Race, The, a poem, 105
Radcliffe, Mrs. Ann (1764-1823), 199, 202, 211-245, 334; *Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne, The*, 213; *Italian, The*, 217, 218, 223; *Journey through Holland*, 240; *Mysteries of Udolpho, The*, 215 ff., 220, 223, 224, 229; *Observations during a Tour to the Lakes of Lancashire*, etc., 240; *Poetical Works of Ann Radcliffe*, 245; *Romance of the Forest, The*, 214 ff., 229; *Sicilian Romance*, 213
Ramsay, John, of Ochtertyre, 101
Raphael, 337
Rapin (de Thoyras), Paul, 153, 208; *History of England*, 91, 204
Reeve, Clara (1729-1807), 204-210; *Castle Connor, an Irish Story*, 205; *Champion of Virtue, The*, afterwards called *The Old English Baron, q.v.*, 204; *Exile, or Memoirs of the Count de Cronstadt, The*, 205; *Memoirs of Sir Roger de Clarendon, The*, 205; *Old English Baron*, 204 ff., 234; *Phœnix, The*, a translation of Barclay's *Argenis*, 204; *Plans of Education*, 205; *Progress of Romance*, 205; *School for Widows, The*, 205; *Two Mentors, The*, 205; *Retrospection*, 143
Reynolds, Sir Joshua, 8, 9, 119, 149, 152, 165
Richardson, Anne, 5
Richardson, Martha, married Edward Bridgen, 5
Richardson, Mary, married Mr. Ditcher, 5
Richardson, Samuel (1689-1761), 1-45, 56 ff., 63, 64, 105, 189, 214, 227, 229, 276, 296; *Clarissa Harlowe*, 7 ff., 18, 22, 26, 29, 30, 31, 35, 37, 43, 58, 105; *Familiar Letters*, 38; *Pamela*, 11, 16 ff., 30, 35, 38, 39, 43, 56, 57, 105; *Sir Charles Grandison*, 8 ff., 19, 30, 33, 35, 38, 43
Richardson, Sarah, married Mr. Crowther, 5
Richelieu Maréchal de, 265
Ridge, Elizabeth, afterwards Mrs. Richard Cumberland, 122
Robinson, Mr., Secretary to the Treasury, 313
Rochfort, expedition against, 87
Rogers, Samuel (1763-1855), *The Pleasures of Memory*, 140
Rojas, Don Francisco de, 247
Rosa, Salvator, 50, 110, 223
Rose, Miss, *Barham Downs*, 287
Rose, Mr., of Kilravock, 291
Rose, Rt. Hon. George, 294
Rousseau, Jean Jacques (1712-1778), 29, 385, 386; *Emile*, 297; *Heloise*, 297
Rubens, Peter Paul (1577-1640), 112
Ruddiman, Thomas (1674-1757), 72

Savage, Richard (1697?-1743), 164
Sawney, a poem written in disparagement of Alex. Pope, 118
Scarron, Paul (1610-1660), 254; *Roman Comique*, 57, 259
Schiller, Johann Christoph Friedrich (1759-1805), *The Ghost-Seer*, 235; *Robbers, The*, 66
Schlegel, 160
Scott, Sir Walter (1771-1832), 2, 51, 52, 66, 167, 245, 295, 335, 385; *Demonology*, 233; *Lady of the Lake*, 368; *Life of Swift*, 385; *Rob Roy*, 52; *Waverley*, 52
Scots Magazine, The, 390
Selkirk, Alexander (1676-1721), 363, 383, 384
Selkirk, Some Account of Alex., 386-390
Selwyn, Geo., 135
Seward, Rev. Thomas, 335 ff., 342; Beaumont and Fletcher, an edition of the plays of, 335; *Poems* (printed in Dodsley's Collection), 335
Seward, Anna (1747-1809), 335-352; Address to the First Fine Day of a Backward Spring, 336; *Correspondence*, 224; *Louisa*, 343; *Memoirs of Dr. Darwin*, 342, 344; *Ode to Independence*, 103; *Poetical Works*, 335
Seward, Mrs., mother of Anna Seward, 342
Shakespeare, 52, 90, 207, 247, 336, 346; *Macbeth*, 52
Sharp, Richard, 134, 140; *Letters and Essays in Prose and Verse*, 134
Shebbeare, Dr., 87, 116, 117

Sheridan, 124, 125, 133, 134, 141, 229; *Critic, The*, 50
Sherlock, Dr., 20, 379
Siddons, Mrs. (1755-1831), 50, 133, 162
Simpson, Charles, 350
Smith, Adam, 167
Smith, Charles, son of Charlotte Smith, 324
Smith, Charlotte (1749-1806), 237, 303-334; *Beachy Head*, 309; *Celestina*, 322; *Conversations*, 323; *Desmond*, 322; *Elegiac Sonnets and other Essays*, 316, 320; *Emmeline, or the Orphan of the Castle*, 321, 328, 329, 331; *Ethelinde*, 322; *History of England for the use of young persons*, 323; *Manon L'Escaut*, translation of, 317, 319; *Natural History of Birds*, 323; *Old Manor House*, 330; *Recluse of the Lake, The*, 329; *Romance of Real Life, The*, 320; *Sonnets*, 321, 326; *To my Lyre*, 309
Smith, Richard, a Director of the East India Co., 306 ff., 310 ff.
Smollett, Sir James, grandfather of Tobias Smollett, 71, 72, 74, 101, 103
Smollett, Tobias George (1721-1771), 51, 52, 69, 71-119, 153, 189, 209, 214, 227, 286, 296; *Adventures of an Atom, The*, 98; *Adventures of Sir Lancelot Greaves, The*, 91, 92; *Advice*, a poetical satire, 76; *Alceste*, an opera, 76; *Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages, etc., A*, 88; *Compendium of Voyages*, 75; *Continuation of the History of England*, 93; *Count Fathom, The Adventures of Ferdinand*, 83, 84, 109, 110, 115, 132; *Don Quixote*, a version of, 85, 86; *Essay on the External Use of Water*, 82; *Expedition to Carthagena*, 88; *History of England*, 78, 90; *Humphrey Clinker*, 72, 98, 109; *Ode on the Death of my Grandmother*, a burlesque, 81; *Peregrine Pickle*, 74, 79 ff., 105, 109, 331; *Present State of all Nations, The* (perhaps not by Smollett only), 95; *Regicide, The*, a tragedy, 74, 78, 90; *Reprisals, or the Tars of Old England, The*, a farce, or comedy, 88 ff.; *Reproof*, a poetical satire, 76; *Roderick Random*, 52, 73 ff., 77, 79, 80, 88, 90, 109, 331; *Sir Lancelot Greaves*, 109; *Tears of Caledonia, The*, 75; *Travels through France and Italy*, 96
Socrates, 288
Solomon, 11, 24
Sophocles, 29
Southey, Robert, 345; *Madoc*, 345
Spectator, The, 39, 188
Spenser, Edmund (1552?-1599), 188, 347
Staël, Mme de (1766-1817), 285
Sterne, Dr. Rich. (d. 1683), Archbishop of York, 170, 172, 175
Sterne, Genealogical table showing descent of Laurence, 170
Sterne, Laurence (1713-1768), 96, 153, 170-187, 296, 297; *Abuses of Conscience, The*, 174; *Case of Elijah and the Widow of Zerephath, The*, 174; *Charity Sermon preached on Good Friday, 1747, A*, 174; *Sentimental Journey, The*, 96, 174, 178; *Tristram Shandy*, 11, 174, 176 ff., 182, 184, 185, 296
Stevenson, John Hall, *Crazy Tales*, 175, 181
Stewart, Professor George, 101
Stuart, Prince Charles, 291
Swift, Jonathan (1667-1745), 11, 107, 167, 177, 358, 366; *Gulliver's Travels*, 199, 385

Telemachus, 103
Telfer, Mr., of Leadhills, 71
Telfer, Mrs., 86, 100
Terence, 257
Théâtre François, 247, 249 ff., 264
Theodore, King of Corsica, 93
Thoresby, *Ducatus Leodinensis*, 170
Thrale, Mrs., 125, 166; *see also* Piozzi
Tom and Jerry, 66
Tooke, Horne (1736-1812), 165
Towers, Miss Anna, 303
Tressan, Comte de, 265, 267
Turner, Nicholas, 303, 305

Vandyke, 37
Vane, Lady, 80
Vane, Lord Viscount, 80
Vannes, Jesuit's College at, 245
Vatican, The, 217
Vega, Lope de, 247; *Jerusalem*, 201
Venus de Medicis, 96
Vincent, Dr., Dean of Westminster, 142
Virgil, 192

Voltaire, François Marie Arouet de (1694-1778), 95, 181, 194, 267, 283; *Candide*, 168; *Candie*, 267; *Zadig*, 267

Wallace, 201
Walpole, Horace (1717-1797), 60, 61, 131, 188-203, 206, 207, 210, 214, 233; *Anecdotes of Painting*, 191; *Castle of Otranto*, 188, 192 ff., 196, 198 ff., 206, 208, 232, 234; *Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors*, 191; *Historical Doubts*, 191; *Letters to Sir Horace Mann*, 203; *Memoirs of the last Ten Years of George II.*, 203; *Mysterious Mother, The*, 195, 201; *Parish Register of Twickenham, The*, 61
Walpole, Sir Robert, 53, 128, 189, 190
Ward, Ann, afterwards Mrs. Ann Radcliffe, *q.v.*, 211, 212
Warton, Thomas, 192
Westminster Abbey, 140, 158
Westminster School, 120
Whitefield, George (1714-1770), 273, 274
Whiteford, Caleb, 95
White, Thomas, 350
Wilde, Allington, daughter of John Wilde (became Richardson's first wife), 4
Wilde, John, 3
Wilder, Theaker, Goldsmith's tutor, 145
Wilkes, John (1727-1797), 94, 95, 99, 274, 275
Wilkie, William (1721-1772), *Epigoniad, The*, 118
Williams, Sir Charles Hanbury, 58, 61
Wilson, Walter, *Life and Times of De Foe*, 354 ff., 364, 365, 384
Winter's Tale, Garrick's version of Shakespeare's, 78
Wolfe, General, 304
Woodes Rogers, 383, 386; *Woodes Rogers' Voyage round the World*, 363
Woodhouselee, Lord, *Essay on the Principles of Translation*, 85
Wordsworth, William (1770-1850), 287, 376
Worsley, Sir Richard, 314
Wycherley, William (1640?-1716), 48, 153

York Minster, 240
Young, Edward (1683-1765), 183
Young, Rev. William, original of Parson Adams in *Joseph Andrews*, 57

Zeno, 288

THE TEMPLE PRESS, PRINTERS, LETCHWORTH

Date Due

APR 18 1986

APR 17 1989

OCT 23 1997

OCT 16 1997

MAY 15 1999

MAY 31 1999

SEP 29 2003

SEP 24 2003

TRENT UNIVERSITY
5032 0

PR105 .S36L4 1910
Scott, Sir Walter
The lives of the novelists

DATE | ISSUED TO 255249

255249